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SA' ZADA TALES

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John Monroe Davis, Jr.
From his Father

Christmas 1912

The Sa'-Zada Tales

BOOKS BY W. A. FRASER

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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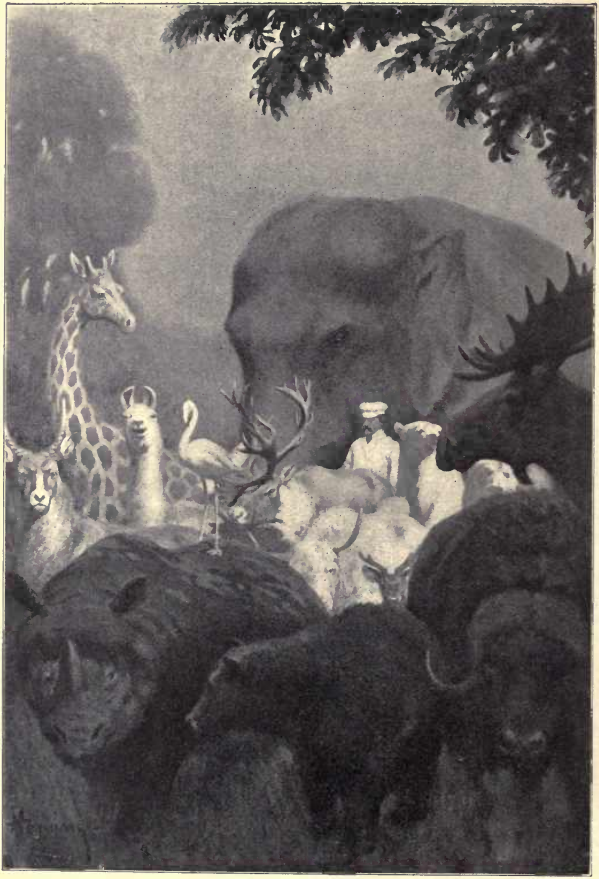

SA'-ZADA HAD GATHERED ALL HIS COMRADES . . . FOR THE EVENING OF THE BIRD TALK . . .
(SEE PAGE 119.)

THE
SA'-ZADA TALES

William Alexander

By W. A. FRASER

Illustrated by ARTHUR HEMING

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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Introduction

All his life Sa'-zada the Keeper had lived with animals. That was why he could talk to them, and they to him; that was why he knew that something must be done to keep his animal friends from fretting themselves to death during the dreadful heat that came like a disease over their part of the Greater City.

In the Greater City itself the sun smote with a fierceness that was like the anger of evil gods. The air vibrated with palpitating white heat, and the shadows were as the blue flame of a forge. Men and women stole from ovened streets, wide-mouthed, to places where trees swayed and waters babbled feebly of a cooler rest; even the children were sent away that they might not die of fevered blood.

But in the Animal City there was no escape. The Dwellers from distant deep jungles and tall

forests had only blistering iron bars between them and the sirocco that swept from the brick walls of the Greater City.

It was because of this that Sa'-zada said, "I must make them talk of their other life, lest they die of this."

In the Greater City men thought only of themselves; but with Sa'-zada it was different. The animals were his children—his friends; so he had contrived that all of the Peace-kind—the Grass-feeders and others—should come from their cages and corrals and meet each evening in front of the iron-bound homes which contained those of the Blood-kind, to tell stories of their past life.

Sa'-zada had asked Hathi, the one-tusked Elephant, who had been Ganesh in Hindustan, about it. In Hathi's opinion those who had seen the least, and were of little interest, would do all the talking —that was his experience of jungle life; so the Keeper had wisely arranged that each evening some one animal, or group, should tell the tale.

THE DWELLERS IN ANIMAL TOWN, IN THE GREATER CITY

SAHIB ZADA, Keeper of the Animals in the Zoo

ARNA, *the Wild India Buffalo.*
ADJUTANT, *the Scavenger Bird.*
BHAINSA, *the Tame India Buffalo.*
BAGHNI, *the Tigress.*
BAGHEELA, *Young Panther or Tiger.*
BHALU, *the Bear.*
COYOTE, *the Prairie Wolf.*
CARIBOU.
CHINKARA, *Gazelle.*
GIDAR, *the Jackal.*
GURU, *the India Bison.*
HANUMAN, *a Tree-dwelling Monkey.*
HOOLUK, *the Black Monkey.*
HORNBILL, *Bird like the Toucan.*
HATHI, *the Elephant.*
HANSOR, (the Laugher) *Hyena.*
HAMADRYAD, *the King Cobra.*
KAUWA, *the Crow.*

Mooswa, *the Moose.*

Magh, *the Ourang-Outang.*

Mor, *the Peacock.*

Musk Ox.

Newal, *the Mongoos.*

Pardus, *the Panther.*

Raj Bagh, *the Tiger.*

Safed Chita, *the White Chita, or White Leopard.*

Soor, *the Wild Boar.*

Sambhur, *A Deer.*

Sher Abi, *the Crocodile.*

Unt, *the Camel.*

Wapoos, *the Hare.*

Zard Chita, *the Yellow Leopard.*

First Night

The Stories of White, Yellow, and Black Leopard

Heming

The Sa'-zada Tales

FIRST NIGHT

THE STORIES OF WHITE, YELLOW, AND BLACK LEOPARD

THROUGH the listless leaves of the oaks and elms the moon was spraying silver over the hot earth when Sa'-zada, throwing down bars and unlocking gates, passed the words to his friends to gather at Leopard's cage.

As he slipped the chain from Hathi's foot, and it fell with a soft clink on the hay bed, he said, "Ganesh, you of the one tusk, keep thou the Jungle Dwellers in order, for if one may judge from the manners of one's own kind, who are men, this weather is a breeder of evil tempers."

"Umph, umph!" grunted Hathi complacently. "I who have seen fifty such times of discomfort think little of it. Surely the Sahib-kind, who are also long dwellers, can remember that there comes another season of cool. But, as you say, Master, perhaps it were well if I take into my trunk a cooler of water for such as may fret themselves into a fever."

Even as Hathi spoke an angry roar shook the building they were in.

"Hear that, Patient One," cried Sa'-zada; "Pardus, the Black Panther, who is at best a mighty cross chap, is in an evil way."

The cry of Black Panther, which was like the falling of many cataracts, was causing the dead night air to tremble. "Hough-hough; a-hough! Huzo-or, Wah-hough!"

"There, make haste, Little One!" said the Keeper to Elephant. "The sight of our friends who are gathering at his cage, has put Pardus in a temper, I fear."

In front of the Leopard's house all the outside animals of the Park had assembled: Arna, the India Buffalo; Sher Abi, the Crocodile; Gidar, the Jackal, and many others; even Magh, the Ourang-Outang, was there with a Fox Terrier who lived in her cage.

"Friends," began Sa'-zada, "if we are all to live here together in this Park, it were well that we know of each other's ways."

"That's a good idea," declared Sher Abi; "for in my time I have known little of the habits of other animals. A dog, for instance, will come down to the water to drink——"

"I know," interrupted Gidar; "and not having the wisdom of a Jungle Dweller like me, he will come to drink and stop to sup with one of your kind. Is that not so, Sher Abi?"

"Perhaps, perhaps," sighed the Magar; "and at home the Pups, having lost a parent, fall into the clutches of Gidar the Jackal."

"I like this meeting," broke in Magh; "a gathering of thieves, and cannibals, and murderers—Eaters of Dogs——"

"And Apes," came like a soft summer sigh from the bellows-mouth of the Crocodile.

"Friends," interrupted the Keeper, "do not fall to quarreling. Let us decide who is to tell the first tale. As we are at Leopard's cage, perhaps he should have the first chance."

"I'm agreed," declared Magh; "murder stories are always interesting."

"I am sure everybody would be glad to hear of your killing, Magh," sneered Pardus.

"Well," continued Sa'-zada, "here are three Leopards: Pard, the Black Leopard; Rufous, the Yellow Leopard, and White Leopard. We'll have their stories for this evening."

"I'm no Leopard," objected Pardus, ceasing his restless walk for a minute. Then he took three turns up and down in front of the bars, his big velvet feet sounding "spufh, spufh," on the hard polished floor. "No," he continued, stopping in front of Sa'-zada, sitting down, and letting his big round head sink between his shoulders, until he looked up from under heavy brows with yellow-green eyes, "no, I'm a Panther. That is the way with the men of my land; to them we are all

'Chita,' or else 'Bagh,' which surely means a Tiger."

"I know," answered Sa'-zada, "you are neither Bagh the Tiger, nor Chita the Leopard."

"I should say not," answered Pardus. "Chita is long of leg and slim of gut—a chaser of Rabbits, and of the build of an Afghan Hound. With one crunch of my jaws—Waugh! Why, I could break his neck."

"What's the difference, anyway," objected Magh, "whether you are a Leopard or Panther—you all belong to the family of Throat Cutters? But what bothers me is that one is black, one is yellow, and one is white; now, in my family, we are all of one shade."

"A very dirty color, too," sneered Pardus. "Waugh-hough! no color at all—just *dirt!*"

"That is so that murderers like you cannot see me to eat me," answered Magh. "If I am on the ground, am I not the color of the ground? And when I am curled up on the limb of a tree am I not like a knot on the tree trunk? That is to keep me safe from you and Python."

"That may be so," answered Pardus, "but I, who hunt in the early night, find this black coat the very thing. Soft Paws! I have come so close to a Bullock, working up wind, of course, that one spring completed the Kill."

"Umph, umph!" grunted Hathi, with eager interest. "All that appears reasonable; but, tell me,

Brothers, why is Yellow Leopard so bright in his spots? And if your black coat serves you so well, how does the other, who is white, manage?"

"I speak only of myself," joined in Rufous, the Yellow Leopard. "True, I also hunt at night at times, but it's slow work; perhaps a long night watch by a water pool, and then only the kill of a Chinkara—a mouthful, and in the time of scarce food, why, one must stalk when the Grass-feeders are within range of one's eye. Who is there amongst you all, even Soor (Wild Boar), with his sharp Pig eyes, that can say, when I am crouched amongst the bushes with the sun making bright spots all over the jungle, 'There is Yellow Leopard, who is a slayer.' Not only is it good for the Kill, this coat of mine, but when the hunt is on from the other side, when I seek to keep clear of the Men-kind—by my caution! more than once, when it has been that way, have I slipped quietly through the young jungle, and left the Beaters running up against each other, asking which way went Bagh. I am no night prowler like Pardus, for often have I killed in the open."

"I know nothing of all this matter," declared White Leopard; "but had I been black like Pardus, or black-spotted like Rufous, I had died of a lean stomach in the white mountains from which I come. Why, there, on the hillside, every rock gleams white in the sunlight—not spotted, mind you, for there is no jungle such as Rufous speaks of; even

the sand-hills are so white with the hot light that a mate of mine has been almost at my side before I knew it."

"White Leopard is from the *Safed Kho* Mountains, the White Range, in Afghanistan," said Sa'-zada for the information of the others.

"I know," declared Unt the Camel; "I've been there—just the loveliest hot sandy hills and plains in the whole world. But, tell me, Little Brother of the Blood-kind," he bubbled, "it is not always sunlight there—at times the white storm comes—high up in the range—what do you do then?"

"My coat gets whiter still," answered Leopard; "and if I close my eyes and stalk by scent alone, why, you would never see me till I was at your throat."

"It's either a lie or most curious truth," grunted Magh, biting the Fox Terrier's ear till he squealed. "Here is a Pup that is white all the time, and no lies about it, either."

"Oh, it's the truth," asserted Wapoos, the Hare; "in the winter time I, also, turn white to save my throat from Lynx or Marten; though it is not of my own doing, to be sure."

"It's Wie-sak-ke-chack, who is God of all Animals, who arranges it this way," said Mooswa, solemnly.

"Well," interrupted Sa'-zada, "one of you Leopards tell us of the manner of your coming here."

"As I have said," began White Leopard, "I was born in the Safed Mountains, and it was a year of much hunger——"

"The very year I was born," declared Magh; "there hardly seemed more than three nuts or berries in the world."

"Come up here, Chatterbox," grunted Hathi, winding his trunk around Magh's body, and lifting her to his massive head.

"Let me hold the Pup," whined Sher Abi, spreading his shark mouth in a disinterested yawn. Hathi blew a handful of small stones which he had been picking up, into the opening, causing Sher Abi to sputter and choke. When the laughter had subsided, White Leopard proceeded with his story.

"As I have said, it was a year of much hunger, because the Affrides made war, and the Sahibs came, and it seemed as though everything that had life in it was driven out of the country. They ate up the Goats and Sheep, and the Bullocks and Camels they took to carry their loads. It was indeed a time of distressed stomachs; and, to make matters worse, my Father, who was a killer of Bullocks and not a Goat eater, dropped the matter of a thousand feet over a cliff and was killed. Then my mother came with me, and I was still a Cub, down to the land of the Marris, where there were many Sheep—the short-legged kind with the broad fat tails; small they were, to be sure, and hardly of the bulk of even a Cub's desire. The very sweet-

ness of their flesh made one wish that they had grown larger. Hunger pains! but it was a long tramp on a lean stomach, and in the end we fell among Men thieves—those of the White-kind, the Sahibs."

"Birds of a feather on one limb," sneered Magh, tickling Hathi on the ear with her sharp finger.

"And in that land, though there were many Sheep, it was hard to make a kill. Why, the Herd Men, Pathans they were called, which I think means the greatest of all thieves, were as wary as Jungle Dwellers. At the first try my Mother got a blow in the shoulder from one of their evil, long-necked Firesticks."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Sa'-zada; "that long gun was a *jezail,* and the Pathans are good marksmen, too. I could tell a story myself of their shooting; but go on, Chita, it's your say."

"As for making a kill at night, Waugh! we had near starved watching for a chance; these Hillmen huddled their Sheep and Goats into caves like children, and slept across the opening.

"And do you know, Friends, they lived so close with their Sheep, that I swear by my mustache they were of the same smell. Fine as my scent is, one night I had crept close to what my nose told me was a Sheep, and was just on the point of taking it by the neck when it got up on its hind legs and roared at me with the man cry.

"We were like to die of hunger when Jaruk the

Hyena came sneaking and laughing, and talked of a blood compact to Rani, who was my Mother. We were so hungry! but it was all to our undoing; for the grinning sneak was a coward, and led us into an evil trap. He told us of three Sahibs, a short journey from where we had our hunt; and these Sahibs were like Cubs in their little knowledge of jungle ways, having Sheep and Goats which they tied to stakes close by the white caves in which they lived, and never a guard over them at night. Waugh! well I remember, hungry as I was, how the smell of Hyena fair turned my stomach, so that I had little longing for eating of any kind; but Rani, being older and having more wisdom, knew that unless we soon found some method for making a kill we should surely die.

"That night there was a small moon as we crept down over the valley and up to a flat-land where the Men-kind lived in little white caves—such odd caves, too, in one place to-day and in another the next."

"He means tents," explained Sa'-zada; "being a Cave Dweller himself, his knowledge of houses is limited."

"It's a wonder he didn't call them trees," muttered Magh.

"Hyena stole along like a shadow of nothing, so smooth and soft were his feet—a proper sneak, I must say I thought him even then, Cub as I was."

"Are you listening, Jaruk?" called Magh, mali-

ciously; "this was a Brother of yours who was in partnership with Chita."

But Hyena only grinned a frothy laugh, and slunk over behind Sher Abi.

"Well," proceeded White Leopard, "we crept along, our bellies close to earth, till we came to a little ledge, where Rani and I waited, while Jaruk stole up to the white caves to see how the stalk was.

" 'They sleep like the young of Owls in daytime,' he whispered when he returned; 'even I, who am a creature of fear, and not like you, Rani, a slayer of Bullocks, have rubbed my lean jaws against two fat Goats that are chewing the sweet cud of plenty.' "

"How your mouth must have watered, White Shirt," sneered Magh.

"Then Rani commenced the stalk, and I, even a Cub, though I had always lain hidden while she was making the kill before, followed close at her heels. Even now I remember just how Rani made the kill. First one paw, and then the other, she stretched out, and pulled herself along, with never so much as the rattle of a single stone. The Goats were like the Sahibs in the caves, safe in the conceit which comes of a full stomach. When Rani crouched lower than ever and braced her hind paws carefully, I knew that the charge was on. Waugh, waugh-houk! By the neck she had one—for that is the way of our kind always—and with a jerk he was thrown on her shoulder, and away up the hill

she raced. I tried for the other, but, being new to the kill, missed, getting only the rope in my teeth. Even as I chased after Rani I could not help but laugh in spite of my miss, for Hyena was screaming as he ran, 'Did you get the fat one, the very fat one?' "

"The Greedy Pig," commented Magh.

"Ugh, ugh, ugh!" grunted Soor. "Why should he be likened to one of my kind? More like he had a paunch full of peanuts, or other filth, such as you carry, Miss Bleary-eye; or if he were greedy, was he not like unto his mate, Chita, who will eat half his own weight at a single kill?"

"Such a row I never heard in all my life," continued White Leopard; "the Sahibs, and the black men who serve them, ran here and there with blinking red eyes in their hands——"

"The Man Fire," quietly commented Mooswa.

"And all at once, over to one side, there was a short growl from a Firestick; and a Sahib called loudly, 'I've got him! I've got him!'

"I wondered what it could be, for Rani and I were together with the Goat. I almost hoped it was Jaruk; but he was close at our heels, sniffing with his hungry nose, and fairly eating the sand where some of the Goat's blood had trickled into it. Then all the blinking red eyes passed swiftly to where the Sahib was, and we heard them laughing —only louder than Hyena laughs.

"Next day Jaruk discovered that the Sahib had

killed the other Goat with his Firestick in the dark, thinking it was Rani.

"Of course, one Goat did not keep the hunger off very long; but for three days we did not make another kill. Not but that we tried. Each night we went close to the white caves, and Jaruk—I must say he had a nose like a Vulture's eye—came back with a tale that the Sahibs were watching with their Firesticks. But the next night we got another Goat. Cunning Animals! but Jaruk used to laugh, and even coaxed Rani to make a kill of one of the Men-kind.

"Then one night we crept as before, close for a kill, and Jaruk came back to us laughing as though there wasn't a Sahib in all the Marri country. Rani growled at him for a fool. Waugh-houk! did he mean to have us all killed with his noise? And who was to do the killing, Jaruk asked mockingly, for the white caves were empty, he said. The Sahibs, and even the black-faced kind, had all gone away, and left the Goats and Sheep for the pleasure of our kill.

" 'It's a Raji (war), I'm sure,' he said; 'and they have gone out amongst the Pathans to kill and be killed, and while they are at it we, who are possessed of a great hunger, will make a kill of the Goats and Sheep.'

"At this we went more boldly than before; but it was only a trap. These of the Men-kind whom we had likened to young Owls, were up on the hill

behind a stone sangar; and just as we came to the Goats in the bright moonlight there was such a crashing of Firesticks, and appearing of what Mooswa calls the Man Fire, that I hope I may never see it again. Rani was killed, as also was—which was not so bad—Jaruk the Hyena. I had a paw broken, which to this day makes me go lame.

"Then the Men-kind rushed down, and the black-faced ones were for killing me also; but one of the Sahibs, speaking, said: 'This is a Cub. We will send him to Sa'-zada.' "

White Leopard ceased speaking, and Sa'-zada, putting his hand in between the bars, patted his paw, and said: "Poor old Chita! it may not be so nice here as in your own land, but we'll see that you do not go hungry, anyway. Now, Rufous, my big Yellow Leopard, you should also have an interesting account of yourself to give."

"Quite likely," exclaimed Magh; "we'll hear some more rare boasting, I'll warrant."

"A true tale is no boast," said Mooswa, solemnly. "I, who have had strange adventures, think it no harm to talk them over."

"Oh, you'll have a chance, Fat Nose!" retorted Magh; "but first let us have a good, hearty lie from Leopard."

"There will be no lies," declared Sa'-zada, "for I have all these matters in The Book—though they are not half so interestingly written, I must say,

as you can tell them yourselves, if you are so minded."

"Phrut!" muttered Hathi through his big trunk. "We'll have the lies as spice—that will be when Magh's turn comes."

Thus appealed to, Yellow Leopard commenced: "I came from a jungle land—Burma."

"My home," muttered Hathi, longingly.

"It may have been the year White Chita speaks of, for I remember I was also wondrous hungry——"

"You always are," sneered Magh.

"Because I have not a paunch that holds a thief's load, whether it be fish, fruit or filth," retorted Rufous. "But, as I was saying when this Goat-faced Ape interrupted me, I was hungry, and, walking through the thick jungle, discovered a Bullock—young, of great fatness. By a rare chance it seemed caught in a branch of the elephant creeper——"

"Elephant what?" muttered Hathi. "Not of our kind. We have naught to do with the killing of any young."

Sa'-zada explained: "Yellow Leopard means the giant jungle vine called 'elephant creeper,' which runs for perhaps the length of a mile, and is so strong that it pulls down great trees and smothers them in its grasp."

"Oh, jungle wood," cried Hathi, much relieved, "that's an elephant of another color."

"I shikarried the small Bullock most carefully," continued Rufous. "Round and round I went, taking the wind from every quarter; there was the scent of nothing but the white jasmine, and the yellow-hearted champac. When he saw me the Bullock-young became stupid with much fear; the two of us stood facing each other. He pulled back tight on the thing that held him, watching me with eyes that seemed as big as the black spots on my ears. I crept closer, and closer, and closer; for that is always the way with my kind; whether the prey be small or great, we kill after the same manner always. Brothers, know you aught of fear? We of the Blood-kind know it well. The Bullock's legs shivered like leaves that tremble in the wind; and he asked me with his big eyes to go away and not take him by the throat for his blood. How did he know that, Brothers—how did he know that I was not coming like one of his own kind to help him in his trouble? And the fear that I speak of was in his eyes.

"With a roar, Waugh-hough! I charged full at him; my strong jaws fastened on his throat, and, with a quick turn upwards, I threw him on his back, and his neck was broken. Ghu-r-r-r-h! Whur-r-r-h! his young blood was sweet as it trickled into my jaws, for I was so hungry. Not that I drank his blood—that is a lie of the Men-kind who know little of our ways."

"They're all alike," chattered Magh; "they

murder, and it is all right because they are hungry."

"Yes," retorted Yellow Leopard, "if I alone made a kill perhaps that would be wrong; but we are all alike—it is our way of life. You are an evil-looking, flea-covered, pot-bellied Monkey, but your kind are all alike, so that is also your excuse."

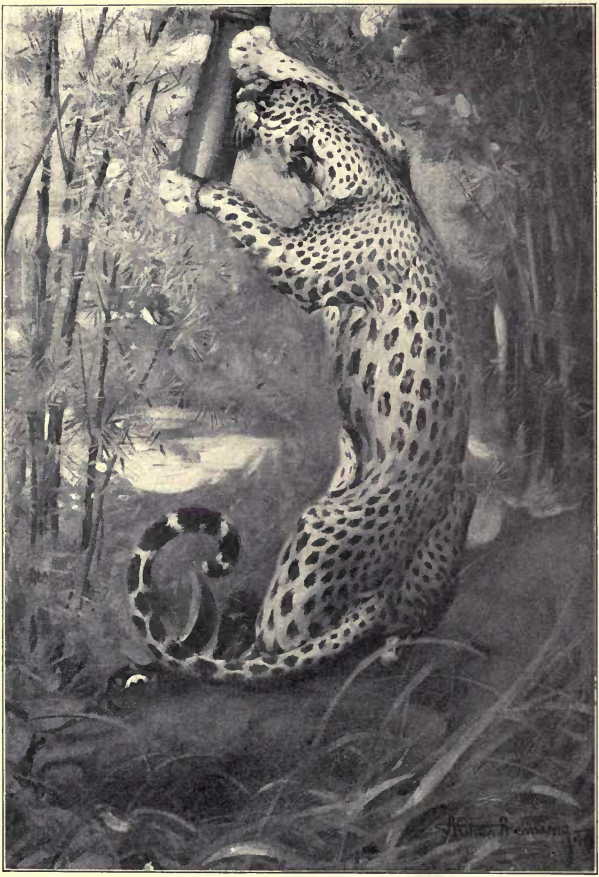
Hathi shoved the tip of his trunk in his mouth, pretending to pick his teeth, but really to smother the laughter that fairly shook his huge sides.

"By a find of much eating!" ejaculated Gidar. "How I wish I had been with you, Killer of Cattle. A whole Bullock! Eating of the choicest kind for three days at least. Often for the length of that time have I searched through a famine-stricken village in my native land, and in the end achieved nothing, in the matter of food, but a pot of hot rice water thrown on my back by a Boberchie (cook)—an opium-eating stealer of his Master's goods."

"Would that you had been in my place," sneered Yellow Leopard, "for even as I was going away with my kill——"

"Squee-squee-squee!" interrupted Magh with a sneering laugh. "Even I, who am a Tree Dweller of little knowledge, knew that a tale from this Cut-throat would soon run into a lie of great strength. May I kiss the Tiger if I believe that Chita carried away a young Bullock."

"You are wrong, Magh," reproved Sa'-zada;



"THE THING THAT HAD ME BY THE PAW WAS OF A FIENDISH KIND."

"in my hunting days have I seen even Bhainsa, the tame Buffalo, who is like unto a small Elephant, carried a full half-mile by Bagh."

"Yes," asserted Yellow Leopard, "had the kill been an Ape like unto Magh, I had bolted it at one mouthful lest the sight of it made me ill. As I was saying, I took the young Bullock in my mouth, but at the first step my forepaw was lifted by something of great strength. I was surprised, for I had seen nothing—nothing but the kill. The thing that had me by the paw was of a fiendish kind. Jungle-wisdom! but I was at a loss. Dropping my prey I tried first this way and then that to break away, but it gave with me every time, and when I was tired lifted me to my hind legs, for the pull was always upward."

"Was it a Naht?" queried Hathi. "One of the Burmese jungle Spirits that live in the Leppan Tree?"

"You were snared," declared Sa'-zada; "I know, I've seen it. A strong green bamboo bent down, the snare fastened to it, and once over your paw—no wonder you were on your hind legs most of the time like a dancing Dervish."

"Why did you not bite it off?" queried Wolf.

"Neither would you," answered Leopard; "though I tried. The evil-minded Men seemed to know just what I would do, and had put a big loose bamboo over the cord. It was always down

against my paw, and simply whirled about from my teeth."

"Why didn't you trumpet?" asked Elephant.

"I haven't a bugle nose like you, Brother; but I roared till the jungle shook in fear—even at the risk of bringing about me the Jungle Dogs, who hunt in packs, as you all know."

"Whee-ugh!" whined Boar; "Baola, the mad kind. Nothing can stand against them. When they drive, the jungle is swept clean. Better to die in peace than make a noise and be torn to pieces by their ugly fangs."

"And who came?" queried Magh. "I suppose you were like the Bullock, and your eyes grew big with the fear, and you begged them to go away and not hurt you. It was all right when you were to make the kill yourself—it was fine sport. Bah! I'm glad you were snared—I hate a taker of life."

"The Men-kind came," answered Leopard meekly, for the mention of his fear made him abashed; "and seeing that I was caught, a Sahib would not let the Black-Men kill me, but set them to make a strong Bamboo cage. I was put in that and sent here to Sa'-zada."

"I've been thinking," began Mooswa, plaintively.

"Well, now!" exclaimed Magh; "I thought you were asleep, Old Heavy-eye. If you think with your nose, your thoughts must have been of great importance."

Mooswa sniffed solemnly and continued: "You said you were hungry, Yellow Leopard. Was it not a land of much good feeding?"

"It was a bad year—a year of starvation," answered Chita. "Up to that time the way of my life had been smooth, for I had found the manner of an easy kill. To be sure, Soor is not the pick of all good food——"

"'Soor,' indeed!" grunted Wild Boar. "Ugh, ugh, ugh! by the length of my tusks you would have found me tough eating."

"You see," continued Chita, paying no attention to this interruption, "the wild Pigs were horrid thieves——"

"You were well mated," mumbled Magh, stuffing a handful of peanut shells in Hathi's ear.

"They used to go at night to the rice fields of the poor natives, and chew and chew, and grunt, and row amongst themselves, until the Men-kind were nearly ruined because of their greediness."

"But they did not eat the natives," objected Boar.

"Neither did I," protested Chita—"while the Pigs lasted," he muttered to himself. "Knowing of all this, I made out a new kill-plan. At the first beginning of dark time I would go quietly down to the rice fields, hide myself in the straw that was near to the place where the Men-kind tramped the grain from its stalk with Buffalo, and wait for the coming of the rice thieves. Soon one dark shadow

would slip from the jungle, then another, and another, until they were many.

" 'Chop, chop, chop!' I'd hear their wet mouths going in the rice; and all the time growling and whining amongst themselves because of the labor it was, and for fear that one had better chance than another; not in peace, but with many rows, striking sideways at each other with their coarse, ugly heads."

"You're a beauty!" commented Wild Boar. "When you shove your ugly face up to the bars the women-kind scream, and jump back—I've noticed that."

"Presently," continued Chita, "one would come my way, seeing the great pile of straw, and I'd have him. Jungle Dwellers! how he'd squeal; and his mates would scurry away jinking and bounding like Kakur Deer. Cowardly swine they were. Now, Buffalo, when one of my kind charged them, would throw themselves together like men of the war-kind, and stand shoulder to shoulder."

"Yes; but, great Cat," objected Boar, "you took care to seize upon a young one, I warrant. Suppose you come out here and try a charge with me. Ugh, ugh! I'll soon slit up your lean sides with my sharp tusks."

"Be still!" commanded Sa'-zada; "here we are all friends, and this is but a tale of what has been."

Chita had turned in a rage at Boar's taunt, and glared through the bars, his great fangs bared, and

tail lashing his sides. When the Keeper spoke he snarled in disdain at the bristling Pig, and continued the story.

"Then came the hungry year. At the turning of the monsoons there should have been rain, but no rain came. All through the cold weather the jungle had gone on drying up, and the grass turned brown, even to the color of my coat. The Tree-Crickets and Toads whistled shrill and loud, until the jungle was like a great nest of the sweet-feeders —the Bees. Then when it was time for rain there was only more dryness.

"The yellow-clothed Phoongyis (Priests) prayed; and the Men-kind brought sweetmeats and sheet-gold to their God Buddha; but still there was no rain. Miles and miles I traveled for a drink; and if I made a kill at the pool it was nothing but skin and bones. The small Deer that bark, what were they? Not a mouthful. And the Pigs shriveled up until one might as well have eaten straw. The Nilgai and the Sambhur-deer, as big as you, Mooswa, went away from that land of desolation, and soon nothing seemed to stir in all the jungle but the Koel Bird; and his cry of 'fee-e-ever!' forever ringing in my ears drove me full mad.

"Then it was that I stalked close to the place of the Men-kind—though I had never killed a Bullock before—and I made a kill. But after that they took the Bullocks under their houses at night, thinking I would not venture so close.

"But hunger is the death of all fear, and even there I made a kill. Then again the Men-kind, in their selfishness, thought to outwit me, for about the small village they built a stockade."

"Were there no guns?" queried Hathi. "I, who have been in a big hunt with the Men-kind, have had them on my back with the fierce-striking guns, and all that was in the jungle presently fell dead."

Chita laughed disagreeably.

"I almost forgot about that. One day, when they were still at the stockade making, I saw one of these Yellow-faced Men tying two sticks together and sticking them in the ground, somewhat after the fashion of Mooswa's hind legs. Then surely it was a gun he put in the crotch of the sticks, pointing at the little runway I had made for myself.

"I went into the elephant-grass that grew thereabout, and watching him took thought of this thing. 'It is to do me harm,' I said, 'for is not that my road? Always now I will come a little to one side, because of this new thing.'

"And in the evening, as I came to the village, walking through the same coarse grass, but to one side, mind you, there saw I two of these Men sitting behind this thing that was surely a gun.

"Only, because of thee, Sa'-zada, perhaps this part were better not in the story."

"If it is a true tale it is a true tale," quoth Hathi, sententiously; "and, as the good Sa'-zada has said, of things that have happened."

"Oh, tell it all," commented the Keeper.

"Only say first you were hungry," sneered Magh; "hunger covers many sins."

"Yes; I was hungry," moaned Chita; "chee-wough! so hungry. The Bullock I had killed was but a collection of bones tied up in a thick skin; I broke a good tooth trying to get a supper off him. And were not the Men-kind trying to do evil for me also, little nut-eater, Magh? They would take my skin to the Sahib and get much profit in bounty. I heard them say that as I lay in the thick grass. I crept close, close——"

"Behind them," volunteered Wolf, "I know. You didn't look in their eyes, Brother, did you?"

"They were busy talking," declared Chita, "and did not look my way. Suddenly I sprang out just to frighten them, for they were close to the stockade, and one ran away."

"Only one?" demanded Mooswa, simply.

But Chita had gone over to the corner of his cage, and sitting down, was swinging his big head back and forth, back and forth, with his face turned to the wall, like a Dog that has been whipped.

"He has caught Sa'-zada's eye," whispered Magh in Hathi's ear.

"It's a nasty tale," said the Keeper, "but I think it is true."

"Yes; it is true," declared Wild Boar; "that is the way of his kind."

"Then," said Sa'-zada, "they got this Sahib who

has written in The Book, and set the snare for Chita and caught him."

"At any rate, you were caught," muttered Hathi; "and from what you say, it seems to me a change for the better."

"Now, Pardus," cried the Keeper, gently tapping Panther's tail, which hung through between the bars, "tell us of the manner of your taking."

"I was caught twice," replied Pardus, blinking his eyes lazily, and yawning until the great teeth shone white against his black coat; "but you are right to call me Panther, for I am no Leopard. And it is so hot here and dry; quite like the place they took me to—they of the black faces—when I was first caught, being not more than a full-grown Cub, as was White Leopard. That was at Vizianagram, up in the hills; but the hills were not like White Leopard's, all hot and dry. The jungle was cool and fresh, and full of dark places to hide in, with deep pools of sweet water that one might drink after a kill. Here the Birds do nothing but scream and scold; Hornbill, and Cockatoo, and Eagle make my head ache with their harsh voices; there, if a Bird had occasion to speak, it was a song about the sweet land he lived in. It is well enough for Hathi to say that being trapped and brought here is a piece of great luck; for my part, all day long I do nothing but think, think of the Madras Hills. There were mango and tamarind, and peepul, and huge banyan trees, with strong

limbs stretching so far that one could walk out full over the Deer paths, and wait in sweet content for a kill. Perhaps even a big family of bamboos growing up about one's resting-place, and whispering when the wind blew, and closing up their thick green leaves to make shade when the sun shone.

"Even where the Men-kind came and sought to grow raji were plantain trees and palm trees—Urgh-h-ah! why should there be anything but jungle all over the world, it is so beautiful?"

"Don't cry about it, Little Bagheela," sneered Magh, "for surely there's some sort of a story, some wondrous lie, in that head of yours."

"True," continued Pardus, as though he had not caught Magh's observation, "there were disagreeable things even there. Of course, it will always be that way when the Bandar-log, the Monkeys, are about. Silly-headed thieves, they were doing no manner of good to any one; but more than once, when I've lain for hours waiting for the chance of a small kill, and the time of the eating had drawn near, everything would be upset by the mad laugh of Lungour, the Bandar-log.

"But I was caught, as Leopard has said, through the coming together of a lean stomach and a trap of the Men-kind—neither a snare, nor the Fire-stick, but a cage with a door that fell. True, inside was a Goat, but what mattered that once the door was down?

"Then they brought me down to the Raja's

palace in the Plains. Stricken land! that was a place for any one to choose as a home—nothing but red earth, with less growth than there is on the end of my nose. The Men-kind lived in great square caves that blared white in the sun. Methinks White Leopard would have felt more at home there than I did."

"What did those of our kind eat?" queried Hathi. "Also, where the Men-kind are is the Animal they call Horse, who is a Grass-eater—was there no grass?"

"Scarce any," answered Pardus; "the Black-faced ones ran here and there with sharp claws, taking up the poor grass by the root, and all for the Raja's stables."

"What did they do with you, Bagheela?" asked Magh, anxious to hear the story, for she was getting sleepy.

"Put me in a cage in the rose garden, where were others of my kind—only they were of the color of Yellow Leopard. Of course, at first I thought it was because the Raja was not hungry, and would eat me another day; but in the next cage was a Leopard who had been there a long time, and he told me why we were shut up that way. 'It's for shikar,' he said. 'Soon all the Sahibs will gather, and we will be turned loose, and they will kill us with spears and the firestick.' "

"That's right," commented Sa'-zada, nodding his head, "I've seen it; also is it written in The

Book. The Raja was a great sportsman, and each year at Christmas time they had a hunt of this kind."

"My Mate taught me a trick or two that helped pass the time," continued Black Panther. " 'Bagheela,' he said to me, 'they will come to us here on Horses; you who have the end cage may perchance keep your hand in, and forget not the manner of a quick clutch with your paw. First, purr and look sleepy,' he advised; 'second, never strike when the Horse is beyond reach, for he is a creature of much fear; third, wait, wait, wait—have patience, Little Bagheela. Also, from in front nothing is done; but stand you ready at the end of your cage, which is a wall, because there they cannot see you, and if the Man comes close, strike quick and sure, for of this manner there is never but one chance.'

"Now, it happened that a fat Sahib came often to the cage, and I could see that it was to teach the Horses not to be afraid of us. It was hard to mind what my Mate said, for the Sahib poked me in the ribs with a stick, or tickled me in the face with his riding-whip; but Yellow Leopard was always whispering through his whiskers, 'Wait, wait, wait—have patience, Little Bagheela.' "

"This is a long tale," whined Magh, sleepily.

"Keep still, Little One," objected Hathi, "no great stalk is ever done in a hurry."

"One day," continued Pardus, "I heard the Horse coming by the end of my cage.

" 'Quick! Up!' called my Mate, Yellow Leopard.

"Like a spring on a Buck I was up on my hind legs against the end wall, just at the last iron bar, ready. Around the corner came the Sahib quite close. It was a new Horse, and he thought to take pleasure out of frightening the poor Animal by a sudden sight of us.

"Waugh-houk! With a strong reach I had the Sahib by the leg.

"Whoo-whoo, waugh-waugh, whoo-o-o-o-waugh! how he roared. Of course, I did not get him altogether, for the Horse saved his life by jumping sideways. I licked the blood that was on my claws, and Yellow Leopard and I both laughed till the Keeper came running with a sharp iron bar."

"I warrant you didn't laugh then," chimed in Magh.

"No; he beat me, though it was all Yellow Leopard's fault. The fat Sahib swore that he would have the first spear in when I was let out at the time of the hunt. He was for having me killed in the cage; but the Raja said, 'No; his turn will come in the Shikar'; and when the Raja spoke there was an end of all argument.

" 'Little Bagheela,' said Yellow Leopard to me, 'we will get away to the jungles together at the hunt time. If they let you out first—never fear,

Little One, you will have a start, for that is the Raja's way, we are to have a show for our lives, though I warrant one cannot get very far in five minutes—do you run very fast, and when you have come to the small mud-caves of the Black-kind, hide in the place where the Bullocks are kept. They will not look for you there, and not finding you they will come back, thinking you have gone to the jungles. When I am let out, I, too, will go that way, and together nothing will stand between us and the hills. Should I go first I will wait for you.'

"Then one day a cage that was on wheels was put against the door behind which I was kept, and with bars that were hot they drove me into it. Then I was taken out to the fields, and when the Sahibs—there were many of them—had gone back on the road, the door was opened. Would you believe it, Friends, though I had been eating my heart out behind the bars yonder, now that I had the chance, I was almost afraid to venture on the plain. Even as I crept forth, a yellow-leafed bush suddenly bent in the wind, and I sprang into the air as though it were the charge of a Wild Boar——"

"Listen to that, Friends," grunted Soor; "of all Jungle Dwellers, he has most fear of me."

"But remembering what Yellow Leopard had said, I ran swiftly toward the little village that was between me and the hills; but not straight in the open, mind you—I had not lived by the

kill in the jungle for nothing. First I leaped full over a long line of the fierce-pointed aloe bush——"

"Phrut! I know that plant," muttered Hathi; "it has points sharper than the goad of any Mahout. Sore toes! but I know it well."

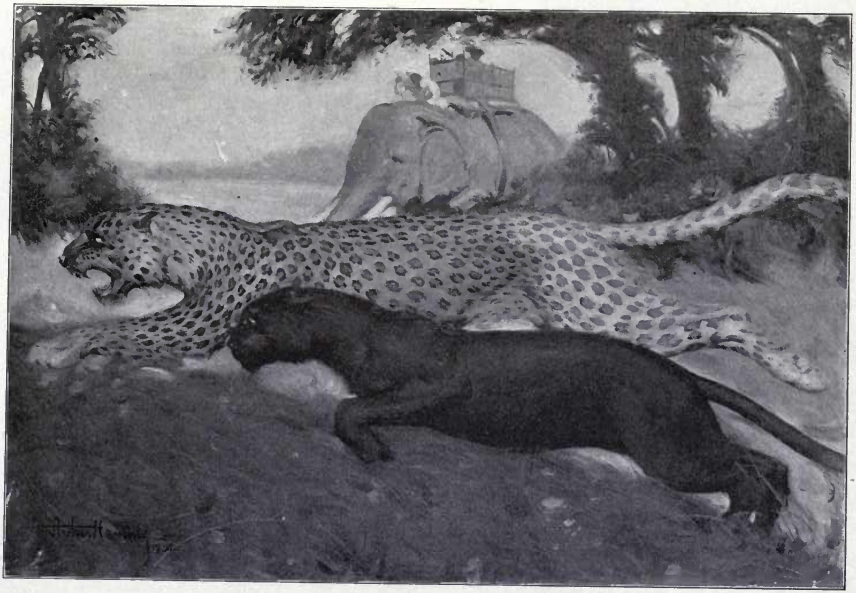
"Even so," continued Pardus, "I ran swiftly along in the shadow of this, and soon found a Bullock cave such as Yellow Leopard spoke of. In the end the Men-kind could not find me, for I lay still, though once I heard the voice of the fat Sahib quite close, swearing that he longed for a sight of the 'black brute.' That was not my name, for I am Pardus the Panther.

"After a little I heard more shouting; then there was a rustling noise which I knew was the gallop of Yellow Leopard. He was calling as he ran, 'Ehow-Ehow-Hough, Bagheela!' just as we call to our Mates in the jungle.

" 'A-Houk! here am I,' I cried, rushing out, thinking that we would soon be safe in the cool jungle again. And away we dashed. By the loss of a Kill! we had not gone far till almost in front of us we saw the fat Sahib and three others on their Horses full in our path.

" 'Oh-ho, my Black Beauty!' he cried, when he saw me; 'now we'll wipe out the score.' "

"That's like the Men-kind," growled Raj Bagh, the Tiger; "they cage us and kill us, and if we so much as raise a claw in defence of our lives we



"AND AWAY WE DASHED."

are reviled, and they have a score against us to wipe out."

"Yes," asserted Pardus, "and long holding in their hate, too. If we fail in a kill, do we go long hungered, turning from everything else until we have slain the one that has escaped us? But there was the fat Sahib, who had not gone back with the others, but was still searching to kill me, Black Panther. Surely that was not what they call shikar (sport), but a matter of hate he had laid up against me."

"You should have taken his beatings," declared Hathi, "even as I have, more times than there are tusks to your paws; phrut, phrut! it has always been that way with us Jungle Dwellers. When the Sahib beat us it is evil fortune if we do not let it rest at that. True, there was a Mahout once that went too far—but what am I saying? surely I am half asleep. It is your story, Bagheela—you were saying that the fat Sahib had killed you—I mean——"

"Yes," said Pardus, "the fat Sahib—I stopped; so did Yellow Leopard, with an angry growl. Then behind I heard a little trumpet from Hathi."

"Not me," exclaimed the big Elephant; "I wasn't there."

"Most surely it is a wondrous lie," declared Magh; "and now he asks Ganesh to say he was there and saw it."

"No, no!" interrupted Sa'-zada, "it was another Elephant."

"Even so," affirmed Pardus; "and on his back was the Raja, coming in great haste.

" 'Charge!' roared Yellow Leopard to me, and with a rush that was full of wickedness he went straight for the fat Sahib; and before I knew how it was done, had broken his neck with the hold that we all know so well.

"The Raja, without waiting for Hathi to kneel, jumped from his back, and rushing like the charge of a Sambhur, drove his spear through Yellow Leopard as he still held the Sahib by the throat, and killed him. Well I remember the spear was buried head deep in the ground.

"In fear, I raced back to the mud-caves in which were the Bullocks; and they brought the cage again and put it to the door. But I was afraid to enter till they dropped fire on me from above. Then I was taken back to my old quarters, and in the end sent here to Sa'-zada."

"It's a pity the Sahib was killed," said the Keeper; "it was a horrible death."

"I was sorry for Yellow Leopard," declared Pardus, "for he tried to get me away with him to the jungles."

"Chee-chee! but I am sleepy," yawned Magh, sliding down Hathi's trunk with the Pup under her arm. "These tales of killings are enough to make one have bad dreams."

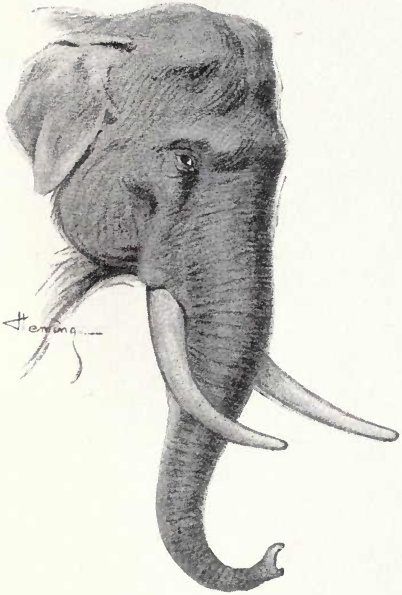
"Dreams!" exclaimed Sher Abi, opening his eyes, for he had been sound asleep; "to be sure, to be sure! I've had a very bad dream. One should not eat so much; but after all, I suppose it is the feathers that are indigestible. E-ugh-h! Sa'-zada, could you not pluck the chickens before you give them me to eat? There was a time when I could digest——"

"Oh, move along, Magar!" interrupted Sa'-zada; "it is bed-time now. You'll have a chance to talk some other night."

And presently the Animal town of the Greater City was quiet, save for the bubble of Camel's long throat, and the gentle snore of Hathi's pendulous nose. The moon blinked curiously through the whispering leaves, and over all there was the solemn hush that comes in the night when the days are days of fierce heat.

Second Night

The Story of Hathi Ganesh, the White-Eared Elephant



Fleming

SECOND NIGHT

THE STORY OF HATHI GANESH, THE WHITE-EARED ELEPHANT

IT was very hot. The Summer moon, pushing lazily through the whispering tracery of tall elm trees that cut the night sky, fell upon the same group of forest friends gathered in front of Tiger's cage that had been there the previous evening, when the Leopard brothers had discoursed so pleasantly of their Jungle life.

"What is the tale to-night, Sa'-zada, loved Master?" asked Magh, the Ourang-Outang, standing with one hand on Mooswa's back, who was lying down.

"It is the talk of Hathi," answered the Keeper.

Hathi could be heard blowing softly through his trunk to clear his throat, then he began his story:

"We were a mighty herd, all of forty, with two great Bulls in charge, I remember; though to be sure when it came to be a matter of danger they seemed to forget all about being in charge and cleared off as fast as they could. I soon got to know that the herd was very proud of me."

"I should think they would be, my big beauty," cried Magh, patting his forehead affectionately.

"You see," continued Hathi, "these white and pink spots all over my neck and ears were a sign that great luck had come to the herd. Even the Men-kind—but that, of course, I discovered years after at Ava—even the Men-kind looked upon me as sacred, being a White Elephant. Besides, I had but the one tusk, the right, and that is why I am Ganesh, the Holy One.

"We wandered about in the Jungle, and when we Babe Elephants were tired, the whole herd waited until we had rested and fed. That's why the Bulls had nothing to do with leading the herd. They knew little of what a calf could stand, so Mah, my Mother, always gave the signal when we were to start or stop. I think she was very proud of being the mother of the lucky Calf.

"But it was a lovely land to dwell in; all hills and valleys with plenty of cover; and down in the flat lands the Men grew raji and rice, and plantains.

"I think there must be some very wise animal who arranges all these things—puts each one in the Jungle he likes best. Pardus was happy in his hills, and White Chita liked the snow mountains, and Yellow Leopard the rice fields; and Mooswa has told me when we've talked together, that on the far side of his lands are the loveliest spruce forests any Moose could wish to live in."

"Perhaps it was Sa'-zada or one of his kind," ventured Muskwa, the Bear.

"It is God who arranges it," declared the Keeper, in a soft voice.

"I don't know who that may be," muttered Hathi, "but I thought there was someone. Such a lovely Jungle it was; tall teak trees and pinkado, and Telsapa from which the Men-kind drew oil for their fires.

"For days, and weeks, and months it would be hot and dry; and then three times the big flower would come out on the padouk tree, and all the Elephants would laugh and squeal with their trunks, for they knew the rain would surely come. Yes, when we could see for the third time a big cluster of flowers, patter, patter on the leaves we could hear the rain, and soon drip, drip, drip, trickle it would come down on our backs, washing the dust and little sticks out of every wrinkle until even the old Bulls would commence to play like Calves.

"We finally came to a big river early in the morning, and every one went in for a wash. Mind, I was only a babe about the size of a Buffalo. The old ones lay down in the river, just keeping their trunks out to breathe, and I thought to do the same, of course; but when I flopped over on my side—bad footing! there was nothing anywhere but soft, slippery water—there was quite a thousand miles of it, and dark as the blackest night. I could see

nothing, hear nothing only the angry talk of the water that ran fast. They said that I screamed like a young pig. Then something strong grabbed me by the hind leg, and pulled me out up on the bank—it was Mah. She scolded roundly. Then she spanked me good and hard.

"All that season I was not allowed to go in the water again. Mah washed me down with her trunk, squirting the water over me.

"The eating was sweet in those Jungles; but best of all I liked the young plantains when they were just beyond the blossom age, all wrapped up in a big leaf, and juicy, and sweet.

"The first happening was from an evil-minded Bagh (tiger). That evening I had wandered a little to one side, not knowing it, and Bagh, with a fierce word in his big throat, jumped full on my head. Of course I screamed——"

"Like a Pig," interjected Boar.

"Like a Babe Hathi," corrected Elephant. "And Mah, who had been looking for me, just in the nick of time threw Bagh many yards into the Jungle with her trunk. I don't know how other animals get along without a trunk; it seems just suited for every purpose.

"The next happening was worse, for it came from the Men-kind. It was a hot, hot day. We were all standing on a hill in the shade of trees, flapping our ears to keep the flies off, when suddenly Old Bull kinked his head sideways, whistled

"THEN SOMETHING STRONG GRABBED ME BY THE HIND LEG, AND PULLED ME . . ."

yellow man. It was a Hill-man, and when this Rogue of whom I speak—he also was a Bull—was just full grown, a matter of perhaps twenty years, this Hill-man thrust into his head, from a distance, too, being seated in a tree, an arrow.

"The arrow remaining there as it did, caused this Bull to become of an evil temper. Quarreling, quarreling always, butting his huge head into a comrade because of a mere nothing; and with his tusks putting his mark on many of us without cause; sometimes it would be a kick from his fore-foot, or a slap of his trunk. When we were near to the places of the Men-kind he would wallow in the rice fields, and pull up the young plantain trees by the roots, even knock the queer little houses they lived in to pieces, for they were but of bamboo and leaves. Of course the dwellers ran for their lives, and sometimes brought fire, and made noise with their guns, and beat gongs to frighten him away.

"Many times we drove him forth from the herd; and sometimes he stayed away himself for days, sulky. In the end we lost him altogether, and we were all glad; but strange as it may appear, I saw him again in Rangoon in the timber yards. That was after I was caught."

"Tell us about that happening," pleaded Sa'-zada, "for it is even not written in The Book."

"I was taken in a manner full of deceit, and because I had faith in those of my own kind. I was,

perhaps, fifteen or twenty years old at the time—but in a Hathi's life a year or two is of no moment, for we are long-lived—and what might be called second in charge of the herd, a condition of things which I resented somewhat, but the Herd Bull had been leader while I was growing up, so there was no just claim on my part really.

"And it happened in our wanderings that we came not far from the greatest of all the Men's places in that land, Ava (Mandalay). One day as I was pulling down the young bamboos and stripping the feathered top, a strange *Hathni* (female elephant) came to me and put her trunk softly on my neck. She was all alone, and I felt sorry for her; besides, she was nice—showed me such lovely places for good feeding. I spent a whole day with her, and the next day, too, and as we went through the jungle, suddenly we came to a sort of immense, strong *hauda*. It wasn't a bit like the Men's *haudas* that they live in, else I should never have been deceived; great trunks of trees growing up out of the ground straight, and close together, but no branches or leaves to them; as square on top as the end of my leg. This queer-looking jungle thing troubled me. 'What is it?' I asked Hathni.

" 'It's my home,' she replied; 'come in, Comrade.' "

"And of course the woman had her way," remarked Sa'-zada; "you went into the parlor, Hathi, old chap, I suppose."

"Not by that name knew I it, Sa'-zada; they called it a Keddah, as I found out. But I went in."

"And was caged," laughed Black Chita.

"Inside," continued Hathi, "was a winding path, and Hathni trotted down this so fast that I lost her. A great wooden gate dropped behind me, and I knew that I was in a trap. It was a big place, but no openings to get out.

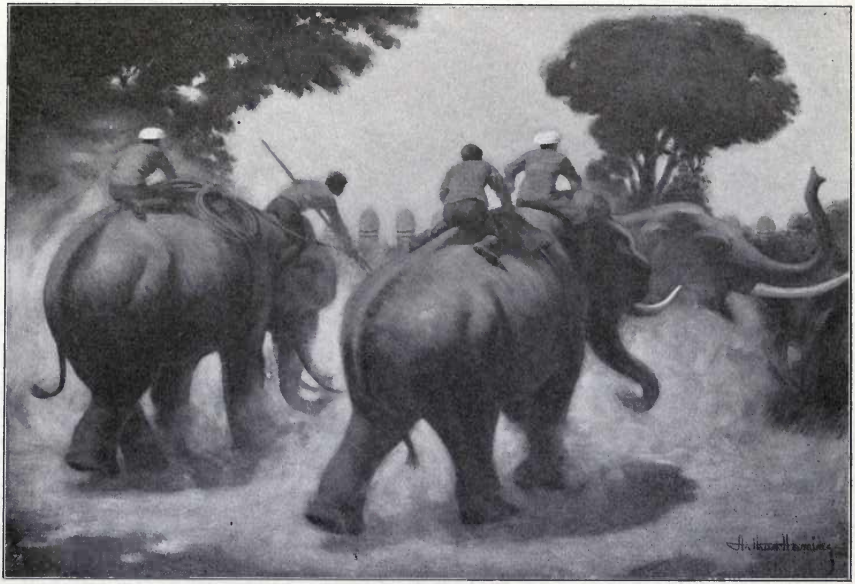
"Then the Men-kind showed their yellow faces all over the walls, just like *Hanumen*—the gray-whiskered Monkey of those parts.

" 'A White Elephant at last, at last!' they cried; 'now will the King be pleased.'

"I was left alone that night, but the next day the Men-kind came with two ruffianly Bulls of my kind who bunted and bustled me about, and fought me, while the men slipped great strong ropes over my legs. In a week I was that tired and sore from this treatment that I was ready to go any place. Then I was taken to Ava; and such doings! I dislike to tell it all; it's hardly modest.

"They put a silk covering over me to keep the Flies off, and a garland of white jasmine flowers about my neck—sweet-smelling flowers they were; in my ears two big red stones of the ruby kind were placed; and always as I walked a great silk umbrella was over my head. And as for eating—humpf, humpf, humpf! they just made me ill with sweets to be eaten out of gold dishes."

"Is this a true tale, O Sa'-zada?" queried Black



"TWO RUFFIANLY BULLS . . . FOUGHT ME WHILE THE MEN SLIPPED GREAT STRONG ROPES OVER MY LEGS."

Leopard. "For one of the jungle folk it is a strange happening."

"It is true," replied the Keeper; "that was the way with the White Elephant at the Burma King's court, it is written in another book I have read."

"And no one was allowed to ride on my back but the King," declared Hathi, "excepting, of course, the Mahout. As I walked I was afraid of stepping on some one; the Men-kind were forever flopping down on their knees to worship me. It was this way for years; then one season there came war; great guns spoke with a roar louder than Bagh's; and vast herds of the white-faced Men-kind came, letting free the blood of the yellow-faced ones; and in the end I was taken away, and sent down to Rangoon, and put to work in the timber yards. There was no worship, and few sweetmeats, and for silk covering I was given a harness with leather collar and chain traces. It was like being back in the jungle again—I was just a common Hathi, only I was called there Raj Singh.

"It was at that time I met the Bull who was a Rogue. He was also working in the timber yards, but it had done him much good—his temper was improved."

"Was it kind treatment cured him?" asked Sa'-zada.

"No," replied Hathi; "they whipped him into a gentle behavior. Two big Bulls with heavy iron

chains swinging from their trunks thrashed him until he promised to cease making trouble. But one day he broke out bad, and smashed everything —tore the Master's dogcart to pieces, knocked the Cooly's *haudas* down, and trumpeted like an evil jungle spirit. He even killed his Mahout, which was a silly thing, though he declared his driver, the Mahout, sitting up on his back, one foot on either side, had prodded viciously at his head until poor Rogue's blood was on fire.

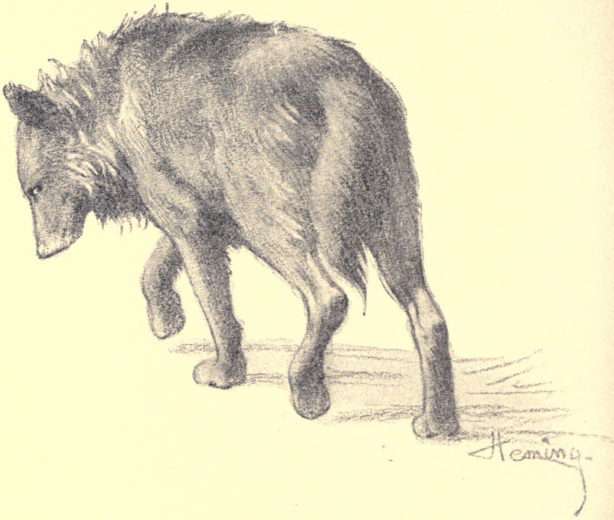
"But in the end they sent me away to Sa'-zada, and I am quite content"; and reaching his big trunk over to the Keeper, Hathi caressed the latter's cheek lovingly.

"Oh, we are all content," declared Magh; "for Sa'-zada is a kind and gentle Master."

"Now, all to your cages and your pens," cried the Keeper, "for it is late. To-morrow night, perhaps, we shall have the tale of Gidar, the Jackal."

Third Night

The Stories of Gidar, the Jackal, and Coyote, the Prairie Wolf



THIRD NIGHT

THE STORIES OF GIDAR, THE JACKAL, AND COYOTE, THE PRAIRIE WOLF

"TO-NIGHT," commenced Sa'-zada, "we are to have the interesting life story of the two half-brothers, Gidar and Coyote."

"A thief's tale of a certainty," chuckled Magh.

"In my land, which was Burma, there were none so useful as we," began Gidar. "Not of high repute our mission, perhaps, but still useful, being scavengers; and to this end we are all born with a fair appetite; but useful always, even Bagh knows that. I was Lieutenant to one of his kind—a great killer he was—for a matter of two years. Then he came by way of a dispute with the Men-kind, and they finished him in short order.

"Now, you know, Brothers, our kind have steadily worked southward from India, pushing into new lands from all time, even like the Sahibs, until we are now half down through Burma. It must be a dull land that has not our sweet song at night. If there were but a Pack here now we'd sing you a rare chorus."

"I've heard the song," quoth Bagh; "it's wretched."

"How goes it?" asked Wolf. "Our Pack has a cry of great strength; the 'bells of the forest,' the Red-men call it."

"It's somewhat this way," said Jackal, and sitting on his haunches he raised his long, sharp nozzle high in air, stretching his lean throat toward the moon that glinted fretfully through the swaying trees; and on the still, quiet night air floated his cry of far-off India:

" '*Oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-o-o-o-o-o!*
I smell a dead Hindoo-oo!'

"That would be my cry, Brothers. Then from all quarters of the jungle the Pack would take up the song and sing back:

" '*Where, where, where, where, where, where?*'

"And I would answer back cheerily:

" '*Here, here, here, here, here, here!*'

"Then all together we would sing with all our lungs:

" '*Oo-oo-oo-o-o-o-o-h*
Mussulman or Hind-oo?
Here, there, or anywhere,
All flesh is flesh, we do not care.' "

"A charming song," sneered Magh.

"Ah, I cannot give it right; you should have heard it, little Eater-of-sour-fruit, in the dead closeness of a Burman jungle, from the many throats of a hungry Pack.

"The people of that land liked the song full well, and they never molested us. But life was one continuous struggle for food. We were not slayers like Chita, or Bagh, or Python; or stealers of crops like Boar and Rogue Hathi; almost as simple in our way of life as Mooswa.

"I remember once a fat Dog-pup of the Terrier kind, which I bagged. It was all the fault of the Pup's master; he tried to kill me."

"You had probably been singing to him," said Sa'-zada.

"We had, I admit," answered Jackal. "It was on Borongo Island; two men, Sahibs they were called there, you know, lived in a bungalow built on high posts, after the manner of all houses in that land. The bungalow was built on the shore, and every day the water came up under it, and then went back again. This was a most wise arrangement of the water's traveling, for it threw up many a dead Fish and Crab for our eating.

"Well I remember the cook-house was a little to one side from the bungalow, with a poor, ill-conditioned bamboo door to it. Regularly, doing our scavenger work, we used to clean up that cook-house, eating everything the servant-kind had not

devoured. Several times I made a great find in that very place, for the cook, it appears, was a most forgetful fellow. When there was nothing left for us in the way of food, we'd carry off the pots and pans into the jungle grass; why, I hardly know, but it seemed proper to do so.

"Neither do I know which of the Pack first started singing under the bungalow; but this also afforded us much content. Many hours on in the dark we'd all steal gently down from the jungle, and gather under the house. Then, as one, we'd give voice to the hunger cry together, until even the Sahibs would shout in fear. It was good to make the Men-kind afraid; but also we would flee swiftly, for the two Sahibs would rush out like a jackal that had suddenly become possessed of much poisoned meat, and 'bang, bang, bang' with the guns.

"I had much to do with Men, and just when I thought they were full cross because of our serenade, what was my surprise to find each evening a full measure of rice put in a certain place for me. 'It is full of the datura' (poison), I thought, and watched while a lean Pariah Dog from the village ate it. But there was nothing wrong with it. So the next evening I made haste to get a full share of it myself. As I ate, hurriedly I must say, twang-g! came a mighty Boar-spear.

"But only the shaft of it struck my back, so I made off with great diligence. I heard the Sahib

say as he picked up the spear, 'Missed him, by Jove!' You see, he had been hiding in a corner of the bungalow. But I was hungry, and the rice was good—most delicious—so I crept back with two comrades, and keeping to the thick grass, stalked the bungalow most carefully. I saw the Sahibs all at their eating, for the door was open, it being hot; you see, he thought I wouldn't come back so soon.

" 'I will eat with you,' I said, and made straight for the rice; but it was nearly all gone; the Terrier Pup of which I have spoken, and which belonged to this very Sahib who had thrown the spear, was just finishing his Master's bait.

" 'Oh, you wicked Dog!' I said, 'to steal my supper this way,' and knowing that his master was in the habit of throwing spears at that very spot, I picked him up and carried him to the jungle for safety.

" 'Oh, oh E-u-u-h!' how he squealed, and the Men-kind left their eating, and came rushing after us with much shouting, but it was dark and they had no chance of catching us."

"And you ate the poor little fellow?" asked Mooswa.

"Horrible!" cried Magh, "to eat a Dog."

"Not at all bad stuffed with rice, I assure you," declared Gidar. "For a day or two I kept more or less out of the way; I was afraid the Sahibs might be very angry.

"It was two nights after this I discovered more rice some distance from the bungalow in a pail which was sunk in the ground, and over this stood a couple of posts that had not been there before. I remembered that, so I sat by quietly watching this new thing, and trying to decide what it might be.

"Now the Sahibs had two pigs, and as I watched, along came these two, grunting, and shoving things about with their long noses, and presently one of them discovered the rice in the pail.

" 'Ugh, ugh, ugh!' said he, 'just a mouthful of this will do me good.' You know, of course, a pig eats first and thinks after, so in this case he plunged his big head in the pail, and 'zip! whang!' went something, and before I could jump to my feet he was dangling in the air hung by the neck; he didn't even have a chance to squeal. Of course his mate took to his heels and cleared out, while I finished the rice, knowing the evil was in the custody of my Squeaker friend. In the morning the Pig was dead."

"It's a fine thief's tale," commented Magh, "but in the end they caught you right enough."

"Not there," corrected Gidar; "that was another place. A Sahib who had come to the jungle seeking dwellers for such places as this, made the taking; but with him one might as well be caught first as last, for he knew more of our ways than we knew of his. Now let Coyote speak; I am tired."

"Does Coyote come from Burma, too, O Sa'-zada?" queried Magh.

"No, he's from Mooswa's country; from the great plains away in the far West. There is not much in The Book about Coyote; that is, not much that's good."

"I knew it," laughed Magh; "I've watched him there in his cage which is opposite mine, day after day, and I never saw a smile on his face."

"You should be put in the cage with Hyena," declared Coyote, "if you think an animal has got to grin all the time to be of fair nature. Or of what use are you, little pot-belly, or the whole of your tribe—Hanuman, Hooluk, or Chimpanzee—none of you worth the nuts you eat; and yet you're always grinning and chattering, and playing fool tricks about the cage. You're a fine one to judge your fellow creatures."

"Coyote just sits there and scratches Fleas, and growls, and snaps at his mate—he's a low-born sort of Wolf," continued Magh.

"He's not of our kind," declared Wolf; "it's all a lie."

"Never mind, never mind," cried Sa'-zada, "no doubt like all the rest of us he has his good and bad qualities."

"I was once starving," resumed Coyote. "You who have lived in a warm land where something is growing all the year round, know nothing of the hunger that comes when the fierce blizzard blots

out everything, and there is only snow, snow, everywhere. Can one eat snow? It's all very fine for you with a paunch full of candy to sit there and prate about stealing, but if Wie-sak-ke-chack puts the hunger pains in one's stomach and the fat bacon—Ghurr-h-h! but the juice of it is sweet when one is near dead—puts the fat bacon behind log walls, what is one to do, eh? Does a fellow dig, dig, dig through earth so hard that he must bite it out with his teeth, dig deep under the log walls for sport as the Cubs play in the sunshine, or just to steal? Bah, you who have never known hunger know not of this thing. Why, once when the ground was frozen hard, and I was dying inch by inch, some fierce-toothed Animal inside me biting, biting—only of course it was the hunger chewing at my stomach—I dove fair through the window of a log shack to get at the meat inside. The glass cut me, to be sure, but that was nothing to the hunger pain that goes on, on, never ceasing until there is food, or one is dead.

"I saved a man's life once at a post called Stand-Off. The place came by its name in the days of a mighty fight when my Man and his comrades stood off the Mounted Police. These Men had been given as bad a name as Coyotes even. My Man may have been bad, too; but how was I to know, being only a Coyote? He was always throwing me bones and pieces of bread, and whistling to me, and calling me Jack.

"Now this place Stand-Off was on the river flat, and one night in spring-time I heard a great flood coming down the Belly River. It was a still night, and the noise of the rushing water came to my ears for miles, but the Men heard it not, for they were all in the Shacks. Fast I galloped down over the flat near to the Shack where was this Man who had often thrown me a bone. I whimpered, and whistled, and barked the danger call, and howled the death-coming song, and finally my friend came to the door and threw a stick of wood at me, and spoke fierce oaths. Then he shut the door. I could hear the roaring getting louder and louder, and knew that soon it would be too late for all the Men-kind; not that I cared, except for this one. On one side of the town was the swift-running Belly River, and beyond a high-cut bank; on my side was the flat land that would soon be many feet deep with ice and rushing water. So I howled louder than ever, and he came out and strove to kill me with a Firestick, but I only ran a little piece into the darkness, and howled again.

"Being a Man of much temper he chased me, and the noise brought out the others, for they thought it was Indians. I sought to lead him over to the side of the flat land which was next the sloping hill, knowing full well that the new water would flow there first.

"All at once he ceased running behind me, and I, who was listening, knew that he scarce breathed

he was that still. Now, he will hear it, I thought; and in an instant I heard him cry to the others: 'Boys, we must pull out from this—there's a devil of a freshet coming.' That was the way of the Men from Stand-Off; many strange words of a useless need.

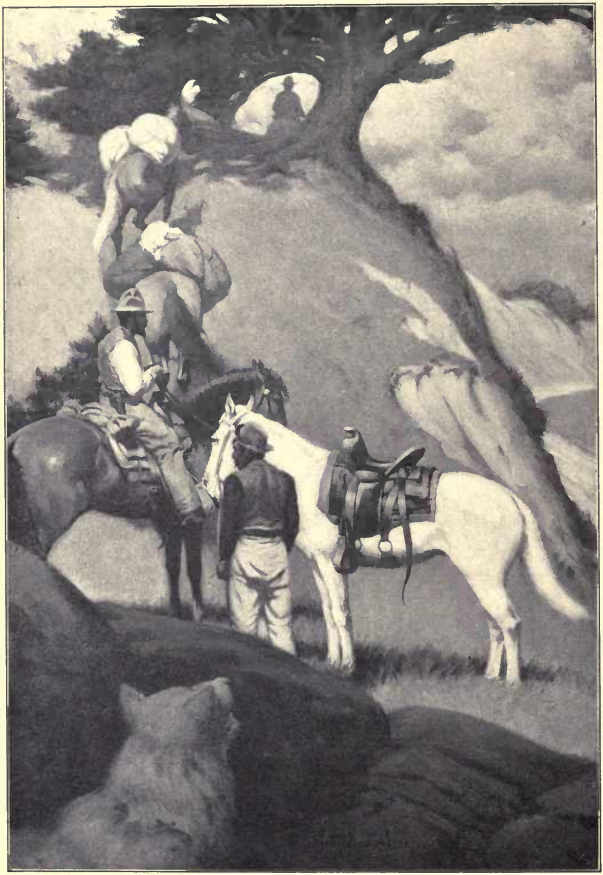
"I tell you, Comrades, it was soon an awful night; here and there the Men ran trying to save something—their Horses and guns for most part, even some of the evil firewater; and the strong swearings they used sounded but just as the whimpering of Wolf Pups, the wind was that fierce, carrying the dreadful roar of the Chinook flood.

"You who have heard Bagh and Hathi scolding at each other, with perhaps Black Panther and Bald Eagle taking part, may know somewhat the like of that night's noises.

"Seeing that my Man was coming riding swiftly on his Cayuse, I, too, ran quickly for the upland; but, as I have said, just in the hollow which was there, being the trail where once had run the river, the flood was rushing even as I have seen it in the foot-hills—the flat land was surrounded.

"As the Men galloped up they stopped, and spoke evil words at the flood, rushing up and down looking for a ford. I also was afraid to cross.

"Suddenly I thought me of a place I knew well lower down, wondrous like a Beaver dam, though I think there had been no Beavers in the land since Chief Mountain was a hole in the ground. I



"I HEARD MY MAN SAY . . . 'STRIKE ME DEAD IF HE HASN'T . . .'"

barked, to call my Man friend, and ran toward this spot.

" 'There goes that locoed Coyote,' I heard him say; 'he's trailing for a crossing; damned if I don't follow him. Come on, you fellows,' and after me they galloped like madmen.

"Just below the place that was like a dam the water was not too bad, for the ice had jammed up above, and it was spreading out all over the flat. I plunged in, for, Comrades, it was a time of great hurry. Swimming a river is not of my liking—none of my kind like it—but this seemed an evil night altogether, with no choice but to reach the uplands.

" 'Sure thing! the Coyote's dead to rights on this outfit,' I heard my Man say; and wallow, wallow, in the bronchos came, splashing and snorting. And so we crossed just as the ice broke in the jam, and swept down like the swift rolling of many stones. I heard my Man say as they all got down from the horses to empty the water out of their long boots, 'If I ever clap peeps on to that Coyo again, I'll shove grub pile into him till he busts. Strike me dead if he hasn't saved the whole outfit of us.'

"Anyway I knew there would be much feeding and no harm if I kept close to these evil Men-kind, for they were great givers.

"I sought to save the one man, and if there be any credit it comes to me because of that; the

others followed him, and even they said *he* had saved them."

"I think it is a true tale," declared Mooswa, "for I once had a happening in saving the life of a Boy who had been good to me."

"What happened to the Men's place, Dog-Wolf?" queried Sa'-zada.

"In the morning there was nothing—nothing but great pieces of ice all over the flat. Then the Men trailed for a place called Slideout, where were more evil men of the firewater way of life, and I followed, arranging it so that my Man saw me, and that day when he killed an Antelope, he left a sweet piece of the eating for me; and I might have lived all my life close to their camp in great fatness, but for the evil chance that drew the Men-kind close to a place called MacLeod. And it was there, being pursued by ferocious yellow-haired Dogs, I hid in a Hen-house and was caught. At first they were for killing me, but there happened a Man-Pup of that house who cried for me as his Doggie, and later came one of the Men-kind, gave blankets in exchange for me, and I was sent here to the place where is Sa'-zada."

"He is either a great liar, or not so bad as is written in The Book," commented Sher Abi, the Crocodile; "but in my land where was his Brother, the Jackal, I never heard good of his kind."

"I am sure it is a true tale," declared Sa'-zada; "Coyote could not have made it up."

Fourth Night

The Story of Raj Bagh, the King Tiger

Herring

FOURTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF RAJ BAGH, THE KING TIGER

WHILE the Keeper Sa'-zada was still loitering over his tea, there came to his ears an imperious roaring call "Wah-h-h! Wah-h-h! Wah-houh!"

"This is the Tiger's night, indeed," he muttered to himself. "Old Raj Bagh is eager to tell us the tale of his life." Then he hurried down to their cages and corrals saying, "Come, comrades; the King of the Jungle calls us."

"We shall have strong tales of blood-letting tonight," muttered Magh the Orang-Outang.

"King of the Jungle, indeed!" sneered Hathi, the Elephant. "When I was Lord of the jungle I knew no king—that is, amongst the animals."

"Now," began Sa'-zada, opening The Book, when the Jungle Dwellers had all gathered in front of Bagh, the killer's cage; "now we shall know all about Huzoor Stripes. And mind you, Hathi, and all the rest, there must be no anger, for Bagh's way of life has not been of his own making; for with

his kind it is their nature to kill that which they eat."

"I was born in Chittagong," began Bagh, "and well I remember the little *Nullah* in which my Mother kept me, a big tea garden spread over three hills just near our hiding place, and there was always much good eating.

"For months after I was born my Mother made me hide in the *Nullah*. That was always in the evening. And as for hiding, how anyone can get along without stripes in his coat I can't understand. Let me hide in a grass field where the sun throws sharp shadows up and down across everything and I'll give my ration of meat for the week to anyone who can see me three lengths of my tail away."

"Where was your Mother all this time?" queried Magh, tauntingly.

"To be sure," answered Bagh, "she would be away for hours making the kill, and when she came back would lick my face, and teach me the sweet smell of new meat and hot blood. Then the next evening, just as it was getting dark, she would take me with her to the kill, which was usually a Cow, and which she had very cunningly hidden in elephant grass, or a bamboo clump, or some little *Nullah*. There would be still half of it left. I grew big and strong, and longed to make a kill on my own account.

"But that year a terrible thing happened to the Buffaloes and Cows upon which we depended for

food. They were all down in the Flat Lands, which is close by the sea, and one day when the jungle was much torn by strong, fierce winds, a great water came over the land, and ate up all the Cattle, and many of the Men-kind. Then, indeed, we fairly starved, for the few that were left were kept close to the bamboo houses of the villagers. Night after night, even in the day-time, my Mother and I sought for the chances of a kill, for I had grown big at that time, and she took me with her. We were really starving; perhaps a small Chital (deer), or a Dog, or something came our way once in a while, but the pain in my stomach was so great that I moaned, and moaned, and I believe it was because of me that my Mother became a Man-killer."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Mooswa. "Became a killer of the Men-kind? Dreadful!"

"I, too, have killed Men," asserted Raj Bagh; "and why is it so evil, my big-nosed eater-of-grass? Your food is the leaves of the jungle, and you have it with you always. When you are hungry you walk, walk, and soon you come to where there is much food, and you eat, and with you that is all right—there is no evil in it. As Sa'-zada has said, it is our way of life to kill our eating. When there is no Chital we kill Sambhur; when there are no Deer we kill Pigs, or even Buffalo; when there is nothing but Man, and we are changed from our usual way of kill by great hunger, we slay Man.

With all Dwellers of the Jungle, there is fear of the Men-kind, that is all, nothing but fear; and when once that is broken we kill the Men-kind even as any other Jungle Dweller."

"Little Brother," began Sa'-zada, "it is spoken amongst my Kind, that a Man-killer is always an old, broken-toothed Tiger, full-manged, and of evil ways; and that once having tasted human flesh he becomes a killer of nothing else."

"Ha-hauk!" laughed Bagh, "those be silly Jungle tales. Am I broken-toothed, or full of a mange, or is Raj Bagh? All a lie, Little Master, all a lie. It is but a chance of the Jungle that makes a Man-killer, even as I will tell, and the taste of the flesh is not more than the taste of meat.

"Yes," he continued, "I was with my Mother that day, the first day of the Man-kill, and in my stomach was a great pain like the biting of Red Ants. It was near the coming of night, and we crept down into the tea garden where there were many of the coolie kind working amongst the bushes. I think my Mother was looking for a stray dog, or perhaps a small Bullock; but the coolies seeing us cried aloud in their fright, 'Bagh hai!' and ran. I think it was this that made my Mother charge suddenly amongst them, for if they had stood and looked at us I'm sure we should have turned and gone away; but in the charge a Man fell. Baghni seized him by the neck, threw him on her back, and we both galloped into the jungle.

After that, whenever we were hungry we went back to the tea garden in just the same way.

"But one day a coolie saw us first and ran to his master's bungalow crying with much fear. Neither of us thought anything of that, for it was as they had done before; so we went on down in the little *Nullah* between the hills, looking sharply for others of the Black Workers. Suddenly I heard a noise as of something approaching.

"'Keep still, O Baghela,' said Baghni, 'here cometh one of the Men-kind, and I will make a kill."

"As we waited, presently there was no sound. 'The kill has gone away,' I whispered to Baghni, but she struck me hard with her tail, almost knocking some of my teeth out; that was to keep still. There was not even any scent of the Men-kind in the wind now; most surely he had gone away, I thought. What a silly old Baghni my Mother must be.

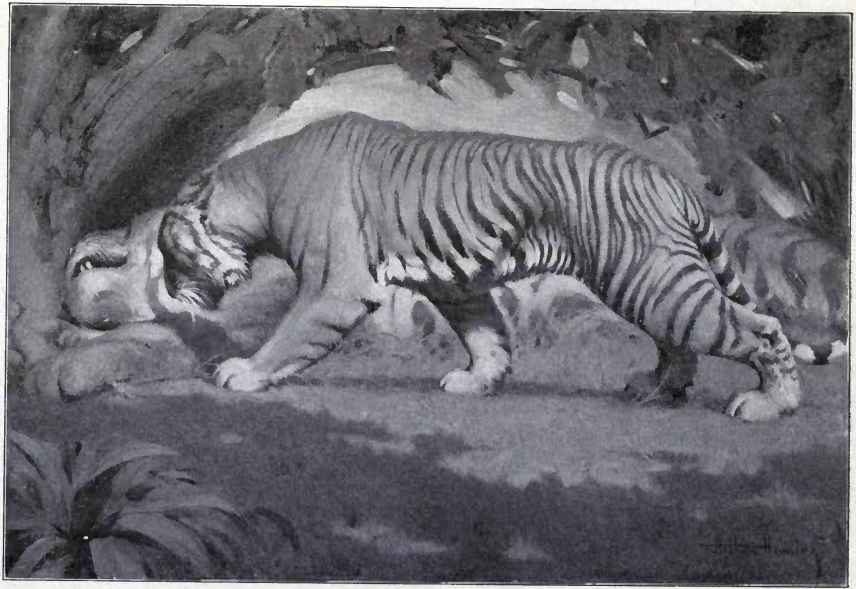
"I heard a soft whistle behind me, 'Sp-e-e-t!' just like that, much as you've heard Hawk in his cage call. When I looked around there was one of the White-face, even the Sahib of the tea garden. I knew him, for I had seen him once before. In his hand he held what I have since learned was a thunder-stick. I looked in his eyes for perhaps three lashes of my tail, but I could see there nothing of the Man-fear Hathi has told us of. Such eyes I have never seen in any animal's head; not yellow

like those of my kind, nor red and black like Hathi's, nor even dull brown like Korite the killer's; just of a quiet color like a tiny bit of the sky coming between the leaves of the forest.

"What was he waiting for, I thought. Baghni had not heard him, for she did not turn her head. Then he made the call like Hawk's again, and Baghni turned her head even as I had, and looked full at him, but he did not run away.

"Now feeling something lifted from me, because his eyes were on Baghni, I think, I looked again sideways from the corner of my eye. Baghni had set her ears tight back, and drawn her lip up in a cross snarl, so that her teeth, almost the length of Boar's tusks, said as plain as could be, 'Now I will crush your back.' But still in his eyes that were like bits of sky was not the Man-fear; if I had seen it there most surely I had charged straight at his throat, for I was angry, and still, I think, filled with much fear.

"Then Baghni turned around, crouched with her head low, looking straight at him. As she did so, the Sahib raised his thunder-stick, there was an awful noise from it, I heard Baghni scream 'Gurhouk!' and she had charged. I, too, followed her, thinking she had got this Man who was our kill; but just beyond in the *Nullah,* even the length of Bainsa's corral from here, I saw her on her side tearing up the tea bushes with her great paws. I stopped for the length of two breaths, but I could



"BUT I COULD SEE THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING VERY WRONG . . ."

see that there was something very wrong—she was going to sleep. Then the greatest fear that I have ever known came over me, and I galloped fast into the jungle to where was my hiding-place."

"They had killed your Mother, had they, Bagh?" asked Mooswa.

"I think so, for I never saw her again. I was afraid to go back where the men labored, and, as I had said, there were no Bullocks, and I nearly starved to death."

"But how did they catch you?" queried Magh.

"It was all because of my hunger. When I was not stronger than a jungle Bakri (sheep), not having eaten for days and days, I heard one night a Pariah Dog howling in the jungle. It took me hours to know that there was no danger near this crying one of the Dog-kind. I went round and round in circles that I had made smaller each time, and drew the wind from all sides into my nose to see if there was the Man scent. There was nothing but the Pariah, and by some means he had got into a hole. Of course, afterwards I knew it was the evil work of this Sahib who had killed Baghni. Such a hole the Pariah was in, it was as long as these two cages, and though wide at the bottom, it was small at the top, even like the cover of Magh's house yonder. I crawled in and caught the Dog in my strong jaws. Sweet flesh! how he howled when he knew I was coming.

"Then with a crash something fell behind me,

and closed the hole so I could not get out, and at once I heard them shouting."

"Where had they come from so soon?" queried Magh.

"They were up in the jungle trees," answered Bagh.

"I think it is a fine lie," grunted Boar. "Do you mean to say, Bagh, that you could not see them in the trees?"

"You have little knowledge of my kind, Piggy. Know you not that when going through the jungle we never look up?"

"I do," interrupted Raj Bagh, "but I learned the trick. Brother Bagh is right, though; I suppose it comes from always looking for our kill on the ground, and I have heard that this is why the Hunters so often kill us from *Machans* (shooting rest in a tree). We never see them until we are struck."

"The Men were all about the hole," continued Bagh, "and it was he of the white face that cried, 'Don't kill him, don't stick him with the spears! He is only a Baghela, and we will take him alive for Sa'-zada.'

"They dug little holes from the top, and bound me with strong ropes; it was so narrow I couldn't turn round, you see. Then I was sent here to Sa'-zada. Though he is good to me, still I wish I was back in my old jungle."

"Ah-h-houk! Great Brothers," roared Raj

Bagh. "My mate has told you of Chittagong and his tea gardens, but the middle jungles in India is the place for a Tiger to rule; and for years I was Lord of the Sumna Forests, and the terror of the Gonds, the little black-faced Men who are wondrous Shikaris. Close grass. Waw-hough! but it was beautiful there. The many red faces of the chewal tree smiled at me, and the purple ears of the sal tree listened to my roar till its great branches trembled in fear. Close hid in the Khagar grass I would lie and sleep all through the long hot day, and the little Gonds, even the big, white-faced Men, might pass the length of this cage from me, and not know that I was there. But I would know. Talking, talking always they would go, and if they were up wind, my nose would find them many jumps away.

"I was born there, and Baghni, my Mother, and Sher Bagh, my Sire, taught me all that a Tiger should know of the ways of the Men-kind. But in the end both of them came to their death through the evil ways of these seekers for our lives. Wah, wah, wah-hough! I am a Man-killer. And why not?"

"You should be ashamed to say so," cried Magh, petulantly, "and before Sa'-zada, too."

"Wah! I was a Man-killer," repeated Raj Bagh, "a killer of many Men, but it was not my fault. When I was a cub my Sire was Lord of the Sumna Jungles; and close to our lair was a *jhil* to

which all animals of those parts came to drink when they were hot, and the hills blazed red with the evil fire of the little Gonds. Chetal, and Nilgai, and Sambhur, and the Ribbed-Faced Deer that coughed like a Wild Dog; even Chinkara, the little Gazelle that is but a mouthful for one of my needs —all came there when the forest grew dark; and always when we were hungry, which was often, more came than went away. It was ever the same with Sher Bagh, who was my Sire, and Baghni, always the same way in a kill with them. In those days I watched it often, for I, being a Bagheela, took no part except in the eating. Chita walks not softer in his cage than Sher Bagh would step through the jungle when he was stalking a kill; and then at the end with a rush it was all over.

"But one year it became so hot—why, the rocks burned our pads as we walked; so hot that our *jhil* dried up, and none of the Jungle Dwellers came to drink. It was hot, so hot, and never a drop of the sweet water falling. The fire crept down from the hills and ate up the small part of the jungle and the grass, and I think the Jungle Dwellers went to other parts. At any rate, as Brother Bagh has said, we were sore distressed for a kill. Of course, we could go and drink where the other Dwellers dared not, close to the villages of the little Gonds. I remember, being but a Baghela and having little wisdom, saying to Baghni, 'Why do we not kill Goru (cattle) and Bainsa, who are here in the

hands of the Men-kind?' But Sher Bagh, who had lived into much wisdom, growled, and striking me hard with his paw, said, 'Little one, that way comes the full hate of the Men-kind, and we who fear not the Dwellers in the Jungle, fear Man.'

"But still we became more hungry, and Baghni, whose milk was my only food, grew unwise and said, 'Let us kill the Goru.' But Sher Bagh growled at her, and said again, 'That way comes the hate of the Men-kind. Now when these little men who are Gonds pass near to me in the jungle, they salaam and say, "Peace be with you, Sher Bagh, Huzoor Bagh"; and they go in peace, and the fear that is on me when I look in their eyes passes away.'

"For many nights after that we wandered far through the jungle, I with Baghni, and Sher Bagh by himself in another part. And in the days that were so hot, as I slept, great times of blood drinking and sweet meat-eating came to my mind—but when I woke there was nothing—nothing but hunger pains in my stomach. It was also this way with Baghni and Sher Bagh. Many times Baghni said, 'Let us kill the Goru, for of what use is the good will of the Men-kind if we die?'

"At last Sher Bagh also became unwise, and said, 'We will kill the Goru, for Baghela and you, Baghni, are starving. When the Goru feed in a herd to-morrow, even in the time of light—which, of course, was the day—together we will creep

close in the much-thorned korinda, and kill a Cow; for if we kill one in a herd there will be less trouble, and perhaps it will not be missed of the Men-kind.' Wah! I shall never forget the sweet eating of that Goru. And the drink of blood! Che-hough! it was as though I had been athirst since my birth.

"Sher Bagh dragged the Goru to a jungle of Kakra trees, and we ate it all. But the next day the Horned Ones did not feed in that place, and as we were walking in the close of the daytime Sher Bagh heard the thin-voiced cry of a Gond cart coming over the road; it was like the song of the Koel bird; it was made by the wheels, I think. 'There will be Goru to the cart,' said Sher Bagh. 'Yes, two of them,' answered Baghni, 'but also one of the Men-kind, a little Gond.' 'Even now I am hungry,' declared Sher Bagh; 'when I roar in front of the Goru the little Gond will pass quickly into a sal tree, and then we can eat of his Bullocks.'

"It was as my Sire had said, and we made a kill, and carried them far from the roadside, and had the sweetest eating for two nights. All our strength was coming back to us, and Baghni, purring softly, for she was pleased, said to her Lord, 'Did I not say "drink the blood of the Goru," when we were starving, and are they not easy of kill?' But Sher Bagh, looking up in the trees, for it was as we came to the kill for our second night's eating, answered, 'We must be careful, for upon us will surely fall the full hate of these little Gonds; and

they claim a kill for a kill, blood for blood; it is their manner of life when they deal with others of the Men-kind.'

"I knew that fear of the little Gonds had come strong upon my Sire when he looked up to the sal trees, for, as I have said, it is not of our habit to look up; we fear nothing of the jungle that hides in trees. The Peacocks, and Monkeys, and Crows, even Panther—what are they? Nothing to claim the time of my kind. Said Sher Bagh to Baghni, 'The Goru that go in carts are easy for the kill.' 'And there are always two of them,' answered she.

"This new manner of life by practice became easy to us; we would hide in the khagar grass or the jowri, which is a nut grass of the Men, beside the road at the day's end, and always we would know of the cart's coming by its voice, that was like Koel bird's, or the miaou of a Peacock. We made many a kill of this kind. And it was this way that I became first of all a Man-killer, even my first kill was of the Men-kind, just an evil chance. It was Baghni who said to Sher Bagh, 'Baghela must know the method of a kill. We have now not much hunger, so let him make the next kill of the Goru, and if he misses, it will not matter, for we are well fed.'

"I shall never forget that night as I crouched by the road beside Baghni, waiting for the little Gond with his Goru. I was trembling like the tall grass shivers at the top when one passes through it.

'Keep still,' whispered Baghni; 'a little noise makes a hard kill, and much noise is no kill at all.' If it had been a Sambhur or a Nilgai we should have had no supper, for the grass whispered under me as I shook it with my trembling. Then down the road in the early dark came the cart with its snarling voice. Just as the Goru were opposite, Baghni struck me with her tail and cried, 'Ah-h-houk!' which means to charge. As I sprang, being but a Baghela, and my first kill, I was slow, and the Goru jumped, causing me to miss sadly. But I landed full on the cart, and by an evil chance the little Gond was under my paws. Mind, Comrades, with me it was but a kill, and I could not see his eyes, and without intent on my part his shoulder was in my jaws, and in less time than I can tell it I had him in the jungle. It was my first kill, and I was wild—but I don't want to talk about it. I wish he had beaten me off, even struck me with the thunder-stick, for, after all, what was the kill? not bigger than a Chetal, and it brought the full hate of the Men-kind to us, and Sher Bagh and Baghni were slain."

"By the little Gonds?" asked Hathi.

"The Gonds and the Sahibs," answered Tiger. "Even your people, Hathi, took part in the kill of my Sire and Baghni. But it was our old enemy, hunger, that caused it all. For three nights we waited by the roadside and no carts passed. It is true one passed; a lodhi cartman, with the wisdom

of Cobra, put Pig's fat on the wheels of his cart, and there was no noise until he was right upon us, even had passed, for the stalk had not properly started, you see. 'Never mind,' said Baghni, 'the little Men of a slow wit, the Gonds, will come this way with their Goru, many of them'; but they didn't. And save for two old Langurs (monkeys) that cursed from a pipal tree as we went back to our *Nullah,* we saw no Dweller of the Jungle, nor of the fields. 'The hate of the little Gonds is coming to us,' growled Bagh. 'And I am so hungry,' moaned Baghni. 'Baghela should not have killed any of the Men-kind,' declared my Sire.

"The Men go to their rest at night, even the little Gonds, knowing that the Jungle Dwellers will not come in great numbers to the fields because of our guard. And it was but an evil chance, too, that I made a kill of the Gond. But when we were most hungered, after many days, one night, not far from our *Nullah,* was a Bullock tied to a tree. 'Waw-houk!' exclaimed Baghni, calling her Lord to the find; 'Che-waugh!' said she, 'here is a Bail of the Men-kind; make the kill.'

" 'It is of their hate,' growled Sher Bagh, 'the Bullocks do not come of their own way here to the jungle—we must be careful.'

"Half the night was gone before we had stalked all sides of the Goru, but there was nothing—not even up in the sal leaves. That was what Baghni

said, for with her sharp eyes she saw Hookus (big green pigeon), resting on a branch, which meant that there was nothing to frighten him. When Sher Bagh had made the kill, he dragged it far away from our *Nullah*. That was most wise, Comrades; it was so that the Men-kind should not find our home.

"When our hunger was gone Baghni said, 'We will eat again when the sun's light passes once more.' 'No,' growled my Sire, 'we will not come back to the kill, for the hate of the little Gonds will be here when they see that we have eaten of the Goru.'

"That was wise also. To make sure, and to teach me, a Baghela, Sher Bagh took us down wind from the drag next night, and the scent of the Men-kind came strong in our faces. 'Our enemies are there,' declared Bagh.

"Being a Baghela I thought this fine play, and by the cunning of my Sire we killed what we found tied in the Jungle, but never went back to the drag. Even once in the dark, as we hunted, hearing the grunt of a Goru, and going up wind to it, Sher Bagh knew that the Hunters were waiting in the sal and pipal trees over the bait, so we went back to the *Nullah* and rested on lean stomachs."

"Your Sire was too clever for them," commented Magh, as Tiger ceased speaking for an instant.

"Perhaps it was clever," answered Raj Bagh. "But in two days more something came to us that

no Jungle Dweller can withstand: a full beat of the Jungles.

"Being but a Baghela," sighed Raj Bagh, "I did not know what it was when the beat commenced; I thought that the forest winds were in an evil temper, but Sher Bagh cried to Baghni, 'Quick! we must go far, for now comes the hate of the white-faced kind, for the beat is their way of a kill.' We lay quiet in our *Nullah,* thinking they might pass. 'Tap, tap, tap!' I heard on one side, much like the klonk, klonk! of Mis-gar (coppersmith bird). 'What is that?' I asked my Sire.

" 'The sal trees cry because they are stricken by the Beaters,' he answered. 'Tum, tum, tum-m!' I heard from the other side of the *Nullah.* 'Is it the belling of a Nilgai?' I asked. 'The little Gonds who are of this beat call with their drums,' answered Sher Bagh. 'All the jungle is falling,' I cried. 'It is the coming of Hathi,' answered my Sire, 'for it is a beat of many Hathi. Come, Baghela, come, Baghni,' he called, and we stole like frightened Chinkara through the sal and pipal jungle.

" 'To the Baghni-wali nulla!' (tigress valley) cried Sher Bagh to us as we followed. But as we sought to enter this place of many caves a Beater smote at us with the thunder-stick from a tree, but that was only to frighten us away, for Bagh whispered, 'The Beaters are not to make the kill.'

" 'Here will be little spoor for them to follow,'

growled Sher Bagh as we ran. Soon we thought we had lost those who sought our lives. As we rested for a little while in some thick, wild plum bushes they came all about us. There were many Hathi, and on three of the Hathi were little caves——"

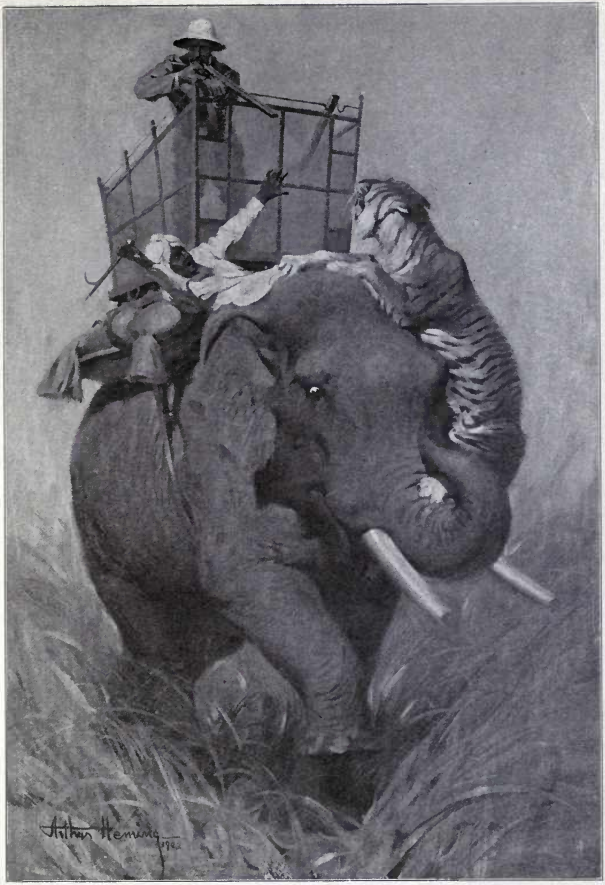
"Haudas," corrected Elephant. "That is the way the Men-kind ride on my back when we are in the beat."

"And the Men had thunder-sticks with which they smote Sher Bagh and Baghni. 'Waw, waw-houk!' roared my Sire when he was struck—'Che-waugh!' he cried to me, 'flee, Baghela, while I charge.' With a rush he sprang on a big Hathi's nose, and I think he got even to the hauda, for the Hathi turned and ran, screaming with pain; and I, seeing this, broke from my cover and charged back through the Beaters who were on foot. Just in my path I saw one of the Beaters striking two sticks together. Being cross because of my hot pads, and what they had done to Sher Bagh, I seized this one, and took him with me.

"After that, I lived alone, and because the Jungle Dwellers had fled from those parts, and because of the wrong we had from these Gonds, I became a Man-killer, eating that which was put in my reach."

"How did they catch you?" questioned Wolf.

"Because I sought to change my way of life," answered Bagh, "and leaving the Man-kill I made



"MY SIRE . . . SPRANG ON A BIG HATHI'S NOSE."

to satisfy my hunger with a Goat. I heard the Goat cry at night-time," continued Bagh, "and after a careful stalk, finding nothing of the presence of Man, I sprang on Bakri the Goat——"

"And the Goat captured you," cried Magh, gleefully.

"Together we fell into a deep hole that had been dug by the evil little Gonds. Though I ate the Bakri I could not get out again, and in the morning the Men were all about me, both white and black. How the little Men reviled me! But it seemed the Sahibs wanted to take me alive, so they dug another hole close to the one in which I was, put a big wooden cage with a door to it down, and then with long spears broke through the walls between the cage and the hole I was in. Of course, I was glad enough to go any place; besides, they threw down on me their dreadful fire. I sprang in the cage and the door dropped behind me. Then many of the Men-kind pulled the cage out with ropes, and I was sent here to Sa'-zada."

Fifth Night

The Story of the Tribe of King Cobra

FIFTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF THE TRIBE OF KING COBRA

IT was the fifth night of the Sa'-zada tales. As usual, Hathi, Grey Wolf, and all the other animals, jostling each other merrily like a lot of schoolboys, had gathered in front of Tiger's cage.

Said the Keeper: "Comrades, you must all be very careful, for this is Snake's night."

"Oo-o-oh!" whimpered Jackal, "is Nag the Cobra to come here among us?"

Even Hathi trembled, and blowing softly through his trumpet, said: "Oh, Sa'-zada, I who am a Lord of the Jungle, fearing not any Dweller therein, feel great pains this evening. I am sure that hay is musty and has disagreed with me. If you do not mind, Little Brother, I will go back to my stall and lie down."

"Will Deboia the Climber come also, Little Master?" asked Magh. "If so, I think my Terrier Pup is feeling unwell; I will take him to my cage and wrap him in his blanket. I hate snake stories, anyway."

"Hiz-z-z!" laughed Python, who was already

there. "Lords of the Jungle indeed! When I strike or throw a loop, or go swift as the wind through the Jungle—Thches-s-s! but I am no boaster. See our friends. When the smallest of my kind are to be here each one makes his excuses."

"Never fear, Comrades," Sa'-zada assured the frightened animals, "Nag the Cobra, and Karait, and all the others will behave themselves if they are left alone. Only don't move about, that's all. The first law when Snakes are about is—keep still."

"Yes, we like quietness," assented Python. "Once there was a fussy old Buffalo Bull who used to come to my pool and stir up the mud until it was scarce fit to live in. In the end I threw a loop around his neck, and he became one of the quietest Bulls you ever saw in your life."

"Now, Comrades," said Sa'-zada, as he returned accompanied by the Dwellers of the Snake House, "Hamadryad, the King Cobra, has promised us a story."

"Look at my length," cried Hamadryad, drawing his yellow and black mottled body through many intricate knots like a skein of colored silk; "think you I was born this way just as I am? At first—that was up in the Yoma Hills in Burma—I was not much larger than a good-sized hair from Tiger's mustache, and since then it has been nothing but adventure. Even my Mother, where she

had us hid in a pile of rocks covered with ferns, had to fight for our lives."

"Phuff!" retorted Boar, disdainfully, "many a nest of Cobra eggs have I rid the world of."

"Not of my kind, I'll warrant," snorted Python, blowing his foul breath like a small sirocco almost in Pig's face. "Of Nag, or Hamadryad's family, perhaps, yes, for, know you, Comrades, what Nagina does with her eggs? Lays them in the sun to hatch *apsi* (of themselves). But my Mother—ah, you should have seen her, Comrades; all the eggs gathered in a heap, and her great, beautiful body—much like my own in color—wound tenderly about them until the young came forth. Perhaps a matter of two moons and never a bite for her to eat all the time. That's what I call being a genuine Mother."

"Very wise, indeed, and thoughtful," cried the Salt Water Snake. "My Mother—well I remember it—carried her eggs about in her body till they were hatched, which seems to me quite as good a plan. Also, nobody molests us—if they do, they die quickly. We all can kill quite as readily as Nag the Cobra, though there is less talk about us."

"Even so," assented Hamadryad, "the proof of the matter is in being here; and, as I was going to say, it is this way with my people; in the hot weather when there is no rain we burrow in the ground for months at a stretch. And then the rains come on and we are driven out of our holes by

the water, and live abroad in the Jungles for a time. It was at this season of the year I speak of; I had just come up out of my burrow and was wondrous hungry, I can tell you; and, traveling, I came across the trail of a Karait. I followed Karait's trail, and found him in a hole under a bungalow of the Men-kind. It was dry under the bungalow, so I rested after my meal in the hole that had been Karait's. It was a good place, so I lived there. Every day a young of the Men-kind——"

"I know," interrupted Mooswa; "a Boy, eh?"

"Perhaps; but the old ones called him 'Baba.' And Baba used to come every day under the bungalow to play. He threw little sticks and stones at me; but nothing to hurt, mind you, for he was small. The things he threw wouldn't have injured a Fly-Lizard as he crawled on the bungalow posts. He laughed when he saw me, and called, as he clapped his little hands, and I wouldn't have hurt him—why should I? I don't eat Babas.

"When I heard the heavy feet of the Men I always slipped in the hole; but, one day, by an evil chance I was to one side looking for food, and Baba was following, when his Mother saw me. Such a row there was, the Men running, and Baba's Mother calling, and only the little one with no fear. Surely it was the fear of which Chita and Hathi have spoken which came over the Men-kind.

"There was one of a great size, like Bear Muskwa, with a stomach such as Magh's. He was

"AND BABA USED TO COME EVERY DAY UNDER THE BUNGALOW TO PLAY . . ."

a native baboo. He had a black face, and his voice was like the trumpet of Hathi; but when I went straight his way, and rose up to strike, his fat legs made great haste to carry him far away. Then I glided in the hole."

"Ghur-ah! it seems a strange tale," snarled Wolf; "even I would not dare, being alone, to chase one of the Men-kind."

"It may be true," declared Sa'-zada, "for it is written in the Book that Hamadryad is the only Snake that will really chase a man, and show fight."

"I could hear the Men-kind talking and tramping about," continued King Cobra, "and meant to lie still till night, and then go away, for I usually traveled in the dark, you know. But presently there was a soft whistling music calling me to come out; and also at times a pleading voice, though of the Men-kind, I knew that, 'Ho, Bhai (brother), ho, Raj Naga (King Cobra)! come here, quick, Little Brother.' Then the soft whistle called me, sometimes loud, and sometimes low, and even the noise was twisting and swinging in the air just as I might myself.

"Hiz-z-z-za! but I commenced to tremble; and I was full of fear, and I was full of love for the soft sounds, and with my eyes I wished to see it. So I came out of the hole, and there was a Black Man making the soft call from a hollow stick."

"A Snake Charmer with his pipes," exclaimed Sa'-zada.

"I raised up in anger, thinking that he, too, would soon run away; but he pointed with his hand, now this way, from side to side, even as the sweet sound from the hollow stick seemed to twist and curl in the air; and following his hand with my eyes, I commenced to swing as the hand swung.

" 'Ho, Little Brother!' he called, 'come here.'

"It was to a basket at his side; for, though I meant not to do it, I glided into it."

"That was the manner of your taking?" asked Chita.

"Better than having one's toes squeezed in an iron trap," declared Jackal.

"Or being beaten by chains," murmured Hathi.

"Yes, the taking was simple enough; but if Baba had not cried, the Men would have killed me, I think."

"And that was how you came to Lower Burma?" asked Sa'-zada.

"Yes," answered Hamadryad, "this man who made music with the hollow stick took me with him, and at every place where there were any of his fellows he brought me forth from the basket, and made me dance to his music. That was what he called it—dance."

"Why didn't you bite him?" queried Rattler, making his tail rattles sing in anger.

"He pulled out my fangs," declared Hamadryad.

"He-he," sneered Magh; "now surely it is a

great lie, this wondrous tale of Cobra's, for in his mouth are the very fangs he says the black-faced player of music pulled."

"Most wise Ape," said Hamadryad, ironically, "what your big head, like unto a Jack fruit, does not understand, is a lie, forsooth. Even though my teeth were pulled three times, they would grow again; but you do not know that—therefore it is a lie. Even now, behind these that you see, and perhaps yet may feel if you keep on, are others waiting the time when these may be broken. Was it not Hathi said some wise animal arranged all these things for us?"

"Sa'-zada says it is God," interrupted Hathi.

"This man made me fight with a Mongoos, that those of his kind might laugh."

"What is a Mongoos?" queried Magh.

"Our natural enemy," answered King Cobra, "just as Fleas and other Vermin are yours. But I killed the squeaky little beast with one drive of my head—broke his back. At Ramree a Sahib bought me from the black man."

"That was the Sahib who sent you here, I fancy," suggested Sa'-zada.

"Perhaps. At any rate he seemed fond of Snakes of my kind, for he put me in a box wherein was one of my family. But he should have known more about our manner of life, for he nearly starved us through ignorance of our taste. He puts Rats and Frogs, and Birds and such Vermin

as that in, with never so much as a Green-Tree-Snake. The yellow-faced Burmans used to come in front of our cage and touch us up with sticks until my nose was skinned with striking at them and hitting the bars.

"Our getting something to eat was a pure accident. One night this Sahib stepped on a Snake—a young Rock Snake, which had curled up in the path for the warmth of the hot earth. 'Oh, ho!' said the Sahib, bringing this new Snake to our cage, 'you are looking for trouble, little *Samp* (snake). Let us see how you get on in there,' and he threw him in our box, expecting to see a fight."

"And did he?" queried Magh.

"Hiz-z-z-za! I should say so. My mate and I fought half an hour before we settled who was to eat the visitor."

"You two Comrades fought over it?" asked Mooswa.

"Yes; that is our way. Two Snakes cannot eat one—how else should we settle the question? we were both hungry. Why, one day my mate flew at me, and I could see in his eye that he meant eating me, and in self-defence I was forced to put him out of the way of mischief, but the Sahib pulled us apart.

"But if I hated the Yellow Men who came to my cage, I liked the Mem-Sahib (white lady). I think it was her voice. Hiz-z, hiz-z, hiz-z! It was as soft as the song the man had brought forth

from the hollow stick. Sometimes I would hear her voice-song near my box, and it would put me to sleep; only, of course, I had to keep one eye open lest my mate would try to eat me——"

"I had no idea Snakes were so fond of each other," said Magh, maliciously.

"Yes; I think I should have eaten *him* to have saved that worry. But I must tell you about the Mem-Sahib and the Cook. He was small and so black—a perfect little Pig. One day when the Sahib was away, the Cook became possessed of strange devils."

"Became drunken on his Master's liquor, I suppose," remarked Sa'-zada.

"Perhaps, for he came and took me out of the box, wound me around his shoulders and waist, and went with a clamor of evil sounds, in to my Mem-Sahib."

"Just like a Man," sneered Pardus.

"Even I was ashamed," continued Hamadryad. "My Mem-Sahib cried out with fear, and her eyes were dreadful to look into.

"I glided twice about the Man-devil's neck, and drew each coil tight and tight and tighter, and swung my head forward until I looked into his eyes, and I nodded twice thus," and the King Cobra swayed his vicious black head back and forth with the full suggestiveness of a death thrust, until each one of the animals shivered with fear.

"I think he died of the Man-fear Hathi has

spoken of, for I did not strike him—it may be that the coils about his throat were over-tight. But I glided back to my box, and I think the Mem-Sahib knew that I did not wish to even make her afraid."

"Most interesting," declared Sa'-zada. "Is that all, Cobra?"

"Yes; I'm tired. Let Python talk."

The huge Snake uncoiled three yards of his length, slipped it forward as easily, as noiselessly as one blows smoke, shoved his big flat head up over the Keeper's knee, ran his tongue out four times to moisten his lips, and said: "I am also from the East, and I do not like this land. Here my strength is nothing, for I can't eat. A Chicken twice a month—what is that to one of my size? Sa'-zada will eat as much in a day; and yet in my full strength I could crush five such as our Little Brother. Many loops! in my own Jungle I could wind myself about a Buffalo and pull his ribs together until his whole body was like loose earth. I have done it. Sa'-zada knows that for months and months after I came I ate nothing, and in the end they took me out on the floor there, six of them, and shoved food down my throat with a stick.

"Once I had run down a Barking Deer, and swallowed him, and was having a little sleep, when I wandered into the most frightful sort of nightmare. It came to me in my sleep that Bagh had charged me of a sudden, and gripped my throat in his strong jaws. I opened my eyes in fright, and,

sure enough, I was being choked with a rope in the hands of the Men-kind. Each end of it was fastened to a long bamboo, and the Men were on either side of me. I made the leaves and dry wood in that part of the Jungle whirl for a little, but it was no use—I couldn't get away. Also a man of the White-kind was sitting on a laid tree, and in his hands was a loud-voiced gun. But I nearly paid him out for some of the insult. They dragged me on to the road, and I lay there quiet and simple-looking. He thought I was asleep, I suppose. At any rate he came up and touched me on the nose with his toe.

"I struck; but, though I knew it not, the rope was tight held by one of the Yellow-kind who stood behind me, and I but got a full choking; though, as I have said, the other, he of the White Face, was stricken with fear.

"They put me in a box, but though I have no appetite here, I could eat there, and they gave me so many chickens that I shed my beautiful skin almost monthly. I nearly died from the over-diet, not being used to such plenty."

"Tell us of your food-winning in the Jungle," craved Sa'-zada.

"Though I go wondrous swift," began Python, "yet if any of the Deer-kind passed me on foot I could not catch them. Because of this I was forced to take great thought to outwit them. You, Gidar, and you, Hathi, know of the elephant creeper that

is in all those Jungles, how it runs from tree to tree for many a mile—so strong that it sometimes pulls down the biggest wood-grower. Well, having knowledge of a Deer's path, I would stretch my body across it much after that fashion, and the silly creatures with their ribbed faces, always coughing a hoarse bark, and always possessed of a stupid fear, would walk right into my folds, thinking me a part of the creeper. Once, even, as I think of it, a hunter—of the White-kind he was—ate his food sitting on a coil of my body as I lay twisted about a tree. To tell you the truth, I was asleep, having fed well, and only woke up because of his sticking his cutting knife into my back, thinking, of course, he was standing it in the wood, when I suddenly squirmed and upset him, and his food and drink.

"But when it was the dry season and the leaves were off the trees, the Jungle was so open that even the silly Deer could see the rich color of my beautiful skin, and for days and days I went hungry. Then I would go to the small water ponds, *Jheels,* and curling my tail about a tree on one side, put myself across, and catching a tree on the other side with my teeth, swing my body back and forth and throw the water all out on the land. Then I would eat all the Fish-dwellers, and go to sleep for a week.

"Once in a land of many pigs, I worked for days and days in that part of the Jungle bending down small trees, and arranging the creepers until I had

a *keddah* with two long sides running far out into the Jungle. Then, going beyond, I made a great noise, rushing up and down, and many of these Dwellers being possessed of fear, fled into the *keddah* and I devoured them."

Chita sat on his haunches and looked at Python in astonishment, his big black head low hung, and a sneer of great unbelief on his mustached lips.

"Surely this is the one great liar!" he exclaimed. "If these things be not written in the Book, then Python has most surely had such a dream as he has told us of."

"Without doubt it is a lie," declared Magh, "but for my part I am ready to believe anything of his kind. In my Jungle home never once did I climb out on a tree limb without pinching it to see whether it was wood or a vile thing such as yon mottled boaster."

"Are the stories of Python written in the Book, O Sa'-zada?" queried Mooswa.

"No," answered the Keeper, "but Python may have had this strange manner of life."

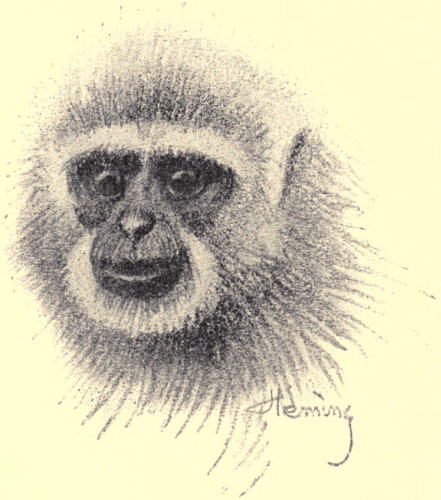
"Whether they be true tales or false tales," hissed Python, "I am now tired, and they are at an end."

"Well," said Sa'-zada, stroking the glistening scales of the big Snake's head, "it is time to cage up now. Perhaps we'll all have strange dreams tonight."

Soon the animals were sound asleep, all but Magh, who spent an hour chattering to Blitz, her Fox Terrier Pup, on the enormity of telling false tales.

Sixth Night

The Story of the Monkeys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SIXTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF THE MONKEYS

SUCH a row there had been all day in Animal Town.

Sa'-zada, the Keeper, had told Magh, the Orang-outang, that the Monkeys were to tell stories that night at the usual meeting. That was the cause of the excitement.

All day the Monkeys, living in a row of cages like dwellers in tenement houses, had chattered to each other through the bars, and admonished one another to think of just the cleverest things any of their family or ancestors had ever done.

"We are like the Men-kind," Magh kept repeating; "we are the Bandar-log, the Jungle People.

"Listen, Comrades, what is my name even? Orang-outang, which means Chief of the Jungle People.

"See, even I have my Dog, as do the Men-kind," and she held up Blitz, the Fox-Terrier Pup, by the ear until he squealed and bit her in the arm. "See, he has bitten me even as he would a man," she cried, triumphantly.

Two doors down were three little brown Monkeys caged with an Armadillo who looked like a toy, iron-plated gun-boat.

"Oh, we are people who think," cried one of these, pouncing down on the Armadillo. The little gun-boat drew his armor plate down about him like a Mud-turtle. The Monkey caught the side of it with his hand, lifted it up, bit the Armadillo in the soft flesh, and raced up on his shelf where he chattered: "Oh, we are the people who think. That is not instinct—my father was never caged with an Armadillo."

At last night came, and Sa'-zada, throwing down bars and opening cages, had gathered as usual his animal friends in front of Tiger's cage.

"Ho, Little Brother," began Black Panther, speaking to Sa'-zada, "why should we who are great in our own jungles listen to these empty-headed Bandar-log? Was there ever any good at their hands?"

"Oo-oo! A-huk, a-huk!" cried Hanuman, "you of all the thieving slayers should know of that matter. How many times have you been saved from danger because of our watchfulness—and also Bagh the Killer! Many a hard drive, the hunt drive of the Men-kind, has come to nothing because of us—because we never sleep. When your stomach is full you sleep soundly, trusting to a warning from us, the Bandar-log. Nothing can be done in the jungles that we do not know. And

do we steal silently away as is your method? Not a bit of it. By the safety of Jungle-dwellers! we give the cry of beware! Listen——

"A-huk, a-huk! Chee-chee-chee! Waugh, waugh, a-huk!" and the voice of the gray-whiskered, black-faced ape reverberated on the dead night air through the houses of Animal Town like the clangor of a cracked bell.

"That is quite true," declared Mor, the Peacock; "I also am one of the Jungle Watchers—though I get little credit for it. None of the Dwellers thank us; and sometimes in their anger the Sahibs who are making the drive shoot us for our trouble, saying that we have spoiled sport. Many a jungle life have I saved through my cry of 'Miaou! Miaou!' "

"Disturbers of sleep!" sneered Black Panther; "there is little to choose between you—you're a noisy lot of beggars."

"You are hardly fair, Pardus," remonstrated Sa'-zada. "I quite believe what Hanuman says, for it is well known that some of the Monkey-tribe saved Gibraltar to the British by their watchfulness, and the men are more grateful than you, for to this day monkeys are protected and made much of there."

"It was my people did that," cried Magot, the Rock Ape, blinking his deep, narrow-set eyes. "We have lived there for a long time."

"And in Benares, where I lived once, we are

people of great honor," added a white-whiskered Monkey. "I should like to see Black Pardus harm one of us there."

The speaker was Entellus, the sacred Hanuman Monkey, whose rights of protection in the City of Temples, Benares, was almost greater than that of the human dwellers.

"You can't twiddle your thumbs! You can't twiddle your thumbs!" cried Cockatoo, mockingly.

"But I can see my under lip," retorted Magh, angrily, sticking it out and looking down at it, "and that's more than you can do, with your lobster's claw of a nose."

Cockatoo had hit the truth about the thumbs, for no ape can make them go around, only in and out straight to the palm. This matter of thumbs is the great line of defence between man and his disputed Simian ancestor.

"Our manner of life," began Hanuman, in the little silence that ensued, "is to live in the tree-tops. Our families are raised there, and we are seldom on the ground."

"No, the ground is a dangerous place," concurred Chimpanzee; "Leopards, and Snakes, and Men, and evil things of that sort about all the time. I, too, build a little house in the strong branches of a tree, and live there until the fruit gets scarce; then, of course, I have to go to a new part and build another."

"I thought I was the only animal that had sense enough to build a house," grunted Wild Boar.

"Perhaps you are," said Chimpanzee; "I'm no animal."

"You are a Monkey——" began Boar, apologetically.

"I'm not a Monkey," insisted the other, very haughtily; "they go in droves. But we, who are the Jungle People, build houses and have a wife and family just like the Men."

"You can't twiddle your thumbs!" shrieked Cockatoo; but Hathi reached up with his trunk and tweaked the bird's nose before he could repeat the taunt.

"Once upon a time," began Hooluk, solemnly, "there was a great Raja sore troubled because those of my kind, the Apes, ate all the grain and fruit in his country. To be sure, it was a year of much starvation. And the King commanded that all the Bandar-log should be killed.

"Then Hanuman, the wise Ape, who was our cousin, asked of my people what might be done; but we, being tender-hearted, and not knowing how to pacify the King, hung with our heads down and wept in misery.

"Now this gave Hanuman, who is most wise, an idea. He ordered all the other Bandar-log to go far into the jungles and hide, while we were to remain and lament, and declare that our friends were dead. The Raja, hearing our sad cry, relented,

and commanded that the killing should cease. And since that time we have always cried thus, and our faces have been black, and all because of the dark sins of the other Bandar-log."

"Was there ever such a lie——" began Pardus; but Jackal interrupted him, declaring that he, too, cried at night because of the wickedness of other Jungle Dwellers.

"By my lonesome life!" muttered Mooswa. "I have heard the Loon cry on Slave Lake, but for a real, depressing night noise commend me to Hooluk. I have no doubt his tale is quite true, a cry such as he has could not have been given him for amusement."

"Scratch my head!" cried Cockatoo; "I think Hooluk's tale is quite true, for even I, who am only appreciated because of my beauty——"

"Hide your nose," croaked Kauwa, the Crow.

"Because of my beauty," resumed Cockatoo, "I once saved the life of all my Master's family. The bungalow was on fire and they were asleep. 'Screeya ah-ah!' I cried; then, 'Quick, Pootai, bring the water——' "

"To be famous one must needs know a great lie and tell it," snarled Pardus, disagreeably. "The way of all Jungle Dwellers is to kill something; but here are pot-bellied, empty-headed Apes, and Birds of little sense, all boasting of saving lives."

"Let me talk," cried Water Monkey, scratching his ribs with industry. "If I tell not true tales

then call Hornbill, and Jackal, and King Cobra to stand against me, for we are all of the same land. We were a big family, a full hundred of us at least, and every way was our way—water, and land, and tree-top. We ate fruits, and nuts, and grains, and things that are cast up by the waters. Talking of fishing, you should have seen my mother. When the sea had gone back from the shore we would all troop down. When the Crabs saw us coming they would scuttle into holes and under rocks, and we'd catch every Crab on the shore. It was my mother taught me the trick—wise old lady; I'd shove my tail under the rock, the Crab would lay hold of it, and then out he'd come.

"Oh, there was good eating on those shores. Fat Oysters the size of a banana. It was mother showed me how to take a stone in my hand, and break them off the rocks. And, as Magh has said, we are much like the men, for not one of our family would eat an Oyster until he had washed it in the water.

"But we poor people had lots of trials. Crossing the streams was worst of all. If we made the Monkeys bridge from tree to tree, like as not Python would be lying in wait to pick off one of our number. And if we walked across on the bottom——"

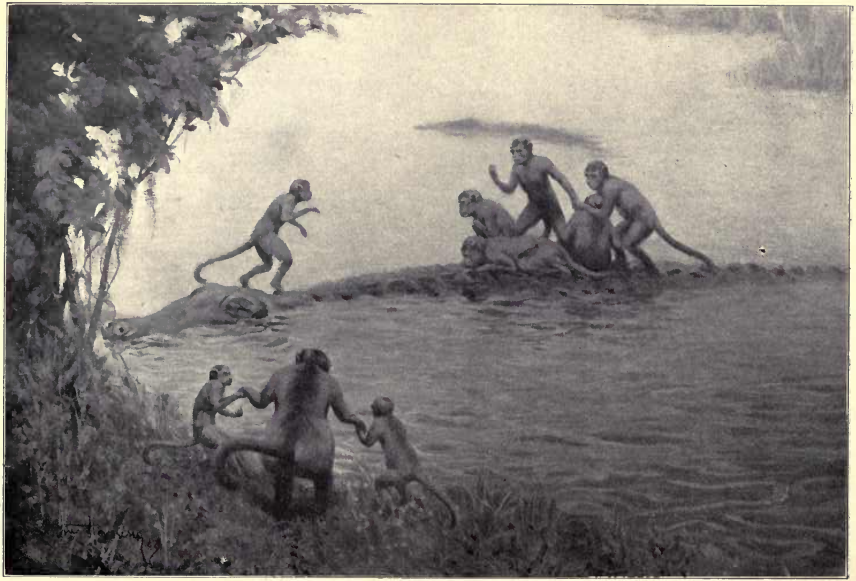
"Walked on the bottom!" cried Sa'-zada, in astonishment,

"Yes, we never swim; we always walk across on the bottom; though, sometimes, of course, we floated over on logs; but that was very dangerous because of Magar the Crocodile."

"Ghurrgle-ugle-ugle, uh-hu!" said Sher-Abi, "the long-tailed one is right. I could tell a true story touching that matter. Whuff-f-f! but it was a hot day. I was lying with my wife in the water near the bank. I was hungry—I am always hungry; and getting food in a small way is wearisome to one of my heavy habit. I was resting, and Black-head the Magar Bird was running about inside of my jaws catching Flies for his dinner. And, while I think of it, while I am by no means vain of my sweet nature, I claim it was most good of me to hold my heavy lips open for him. Suddenly Black-head gave his little cry of warning to me and flew up in the air. 'Something is coming,' I whispered to Abni, my wife; and, sure enough, it was the Bandar-log, the Water Monkeys, chattering and yelling, and knocking down fruit from the trees as though the whole jungle belonged to them.

" 'The old trick,' I whispered to Abni; 'float across like a log.' You know I can look wondrous like a log when I try; and a dinner of the Bandar-log, even, was not to be despised in a time of great hunger.

" 'Chee-chee, a-houp-a-houp, chickety-chee-chee!' You'd have thought their throats would split with



"AND THEY ALL CLAMBERED ON TO MY BACK."

the uproar when they saw one log floating across and another just starting.

" 'Oh, ho!' cried the leader, swinging by his tail from a limb of the Mangrove tree, and peering down at me; 'the wind is driving all the dead trees from this side to the other. Get aboard, children, quick.' And they all clambered on to my back, shoving and pushing like a lot of Jackal pups——"

"Have I not said it," cried Gidar, the Jackal, "that Sher-Abi is a devourer of our young? Jackal pups—murderer!"

"Half way across," resumed Sher-Abi, "I opened an eye to take a squint at the general condition of these Bandar-log, as to which might be fat and which might be lean, and, would you believe it, the leader of these fool people saw me looking, and screamed with fright. I closed all the valves of nostrils and eyes and sank in the water. The Bandar-log were so excited that more than half of them jumped into my jaws, and Abni, who came back, hearing the noise, took care of the others. Eh-hu! Gluck! Monkeys are stupid, but not bad eating."

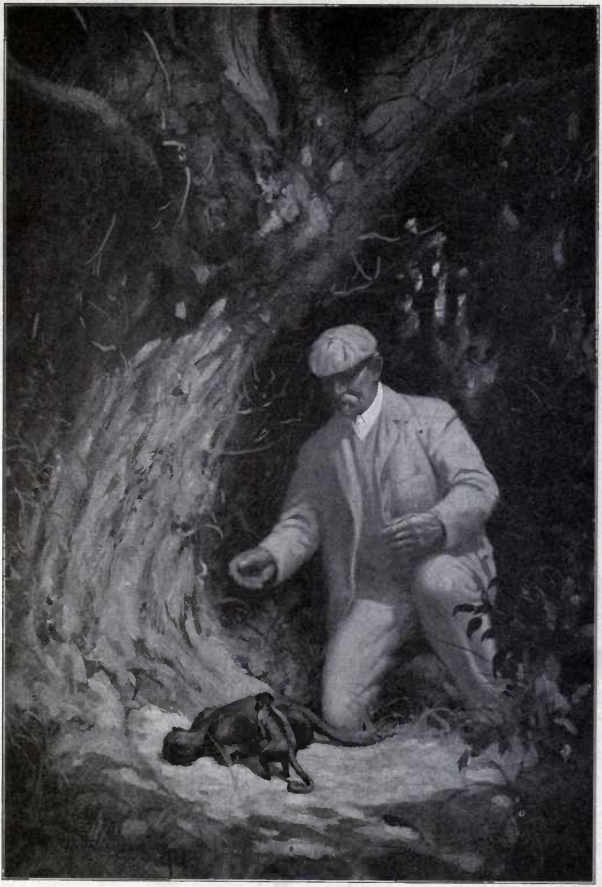
"Listen to that, Comrades," cried Water Monkey. "Sher-Abi the Poacher boasts of killing my people. Have I not said that our life is one of danger? He and Python are as bad as Men. My mother was killed by a Man, and all for the sake of a few mangoes."

"But how are we to know that Mango-tree was

not as others in the Jungle?" pleaded Monkey. "True it grew close to a bungalow, but what of that? Close to the Jungle, trees and bungalows are so mixed up that nobody knows which is free land and which is bond land. Have I not seen even the Men-kind frightened over such matters, and killing each other. But, as I have said, this Man, who was a Sahib, shot my mother as she was in a tree. She clung to a limb, and, young as I was, I helped her, holding on to her arms. All day she cried, and cried, and cried, just as you have heard the young of the Men-kind; and all night she cried, too. In the morning the Sahib came out, and I heard him say that he hadn't slept all night because of the wailing that was like a babe's. When he looked up at my mother she became so afraid that she fell dead at his feet. Peeping down through the leaves I saw the fear look that Hathi has spoken of come into the Man's eyes, only they did not look evil as they had when he pointed the fire-stick at us. I swung down from branch to branch to my mother, and sitting beside her, cried also, being but a little chap and all alone in the Jungle. Then the Man took me up in his arms and said: 'Poor little Oungea. It was a shame to kill the old girl; I feel like a murderer——'

"He took me into the bungalow and I had a fine life of it, though he taught me many things that were evil."

"I don't believe that," sneered Pardus.



"AND SITTING BESIDE HER, CRIED ALSO, BEING BUT A LITTLE CHAP AND ALL ALONE IN THE JUNGLE . . ."

"Impossible! Caw-w!" laughed Kauwa.

"What evil tricks are there left to teach the Bandar-log?" queried Hathi.

"He taught me to drink gin," answered Oungea; "at first a little gin and much sugar, and after a time I could take it without sugar."

"This rather bears out Magh's claim that you Jungle People are like the Men," said Sa'-zada.

"Still it was not good for me, this gin," continued Oungea; "leaving one's head full of much soreness in the morning. But, of course, being young, I was possessed of much mischief that was not of the Sahib's teaching."

"He-he! no doubt, no doubt," cried Hornbill, "it was those of your kind, both young and old, who plucked the feathers from my children once upon a time. Plaintain-at-a-gulp! but their appearance was unseemly. You can imagine what I should look like with my prominent nose and no feathers."

"My Master carried in his pocket something that was forever crying 'tick, tick, tick.' I felt sure there must be Lizards or Spiders, or other sweet ones of a small kind within; but one day when I had a fair opportunity and pulled it apart, cracking it with a stone as I had the Oysters, I got no eating at all, but in the end a sound beating.

"Once I ate the little berries that grow on the sticks that cause the fire——"

"Matches," suggested Sa'-zada.

'Perhaps; I thought they were berries. Many pains! but I was sick, and my kind Master saved my life with cocoanut oil."

"Magh knows something of that matter," declared Sa'-zada; "when she first came here she ate her straw bedding and it nearly killed her."

"A fine record these Jungle People have," sneered Pardus. "I, who claim not to be wise like the Men, have sense enough to stick to my meat."

"But Magh was wise," asserted Sa'-zada, "for if she had not helped us in every way when we were trying to save her life she would surely have died."

"In my Master's house," said Oungea, "was one of their young, a Babe; and whenever I got loose, for they took to tying me up, I made straight for his bed, borrowed his bottle of milk—there surely was no harm in that, for we were babes together—and scuttled up a tree where I could drink the milk in peace. When I dropped the bottle down so that they might get it, it always broke, and I think it was because of this mischief that they whipped me."

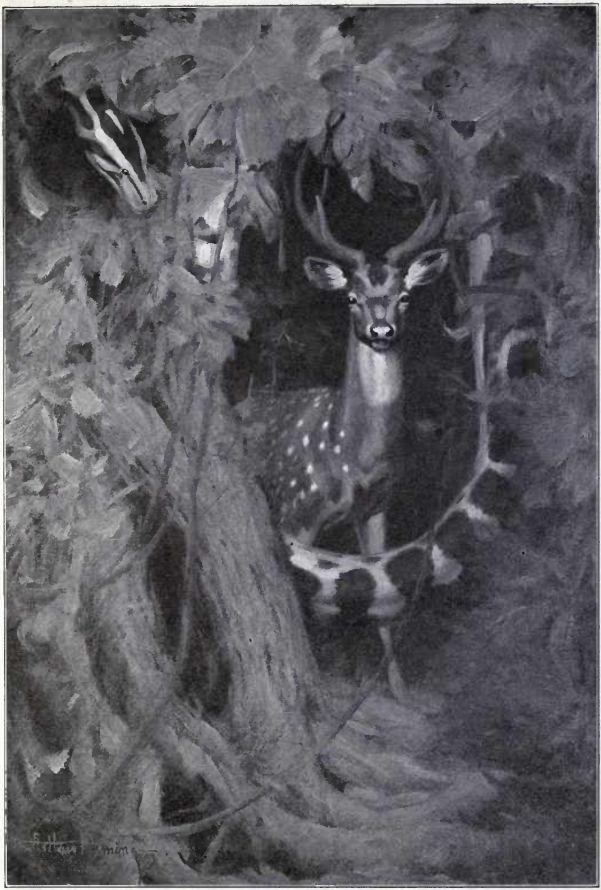
"Well," said Sa-zada, "we were to have learned to-night why the Bandar-log were Men of the Jungle, first cousins to the Men-kind; but all I remember is that they ate matches and straw and got very sick. For my part I am very sleepy."

"If you are tired, I will carry you, Hanuman," lisped Python, shoving his ugly fat head forward.

"Even I, who find it a labor to walk on the land, will give any Monkey who seeks it a ride," sighed Sher-Abi. "This talking of eating has made me hung—— I mean ready to put myself out for my friends."

"Take your friends in, you mean," snarled Gidar, jumping back as the heavy jaws of the Crocodile snapped within an inch of his nose.

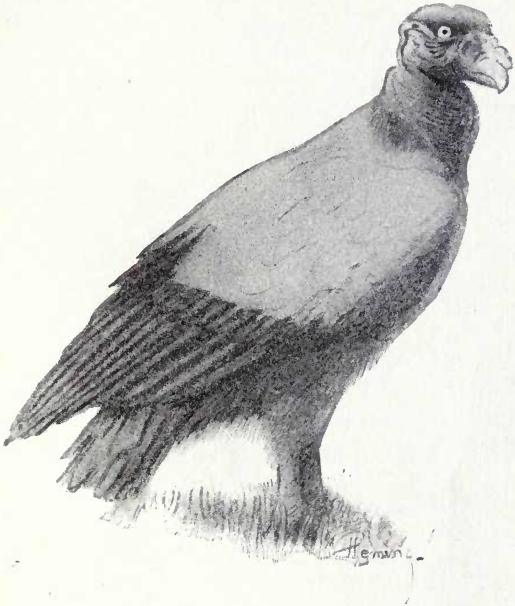
"I think each one will look after himself," declared Sa'-zada; "it will be safer. All to your cages."

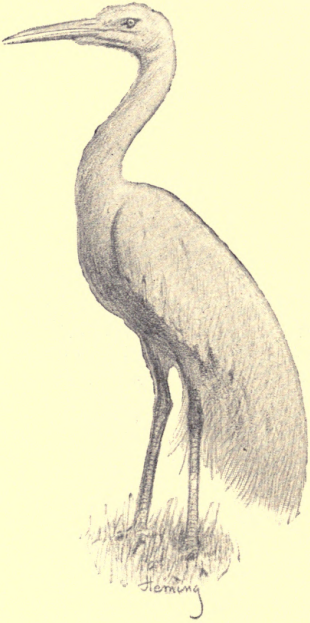


"I WOULD STRETCH MY BODY ACROSS IT MUCH AFTER THAT FASHION."

Seventh Night

The Story of Birds of a Feather





SEVENTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF BIRDS OF A FEATHER

WHEN Sa'-zada the Keeper had gathered all his comrades in front of Chita's cage for the evening of the Bird talk, Magh clambered up on her usual perch, Hathi's head, expostulating against the folly of throwing the meeting open to such gabblers.

"Never mind," remarked Black Panther, "it's the great talkers that are thought most of here, I see. We, who have accomplished much, having earned an honest living, but are not over ready with the tongue, amount to but little."

"Scree-he-ah-h!" cried Cockatoo. "By my crest! I am surely the oldest one here; shall I begin, O Sa'zada?"

"Cockatoo was born in Australia," declared Sa'-zada; "at least The Book says so, but the record of his age only goes back a matter of forty years."

"Just so," concurred the Cockatoo, "and from there I went to India on a ship; and for downright evil words there is no Jungle to compare with a

ship. Why, damn it—excuse me, friends, even the memory of my voyage causes me to swear.

"My master, who was Captain of the ship, gave me to one of the Women-kind in Calcutta—'Mem-Sahib' the others called her. There I had just the loveliest life any poor exiled Cockatoo could wish for; it makes me swear—weep, I mean—when I think of the sweet Eatings she had for me. Not but that Sa'-zada is kind, only no one but a Woman knows how to look after a Cockatoo. At tiffin I was always allowed to come on the table, and the Mem-Sahib would take the cream from the top of the milk and give it to me. The Sahib threw pieces of bread at my head, which is like a Man's way, having no regard for the dignity of a Cockatoo.

"One day, being frightened because of something, I fluttered to the top of his head, which was all bare of feathers, and verily I believe the Man-fear, of which Hathi has spoken, came to my new master. I could almost fancy I was back on the ship, for his language was much like that of the fo'castle.

"Potai was the sweeper, a low-caste Hindoo of an evil presence; and save for the fact that he wore no foot-covering I should have been in a bad way. When the Mem-Sahib was not looking he beat me with his broom, simply because, that often being lonesome, I'd call aloud, 'Potai! Potai!' just to see him come running from the stables.

"Thinking to break him of his evil habit of beating me, many times I hid behind the *purda* of a door waiting for the coming of his ugly toes. Swisp! swisp! I'd hear the broom; 'Uh-h, uh-h!' old Potai would grunt, because of the stooping, and presently under the *purda,* which hung straight down, would peep his low-caste toes.

"Click! just like that I'd nip quick, and run for the Mem-Sahib, screaming that Potai was beating me. I'm sure it was not an evil act on my part, for if any Sahib saw it he would laugh, and give me nuts or something sweet. That was because everyone knew that Potai was evil and of a low caste.

"Many a time I saved the tiffin from the thieving crows——"

"Caw-w-w, what-a yar-r-r-n!" growled Kauwa the Crow. "We who are the cleaners of cities are not thieves. What is a Cockatoo? A teller of false tales and a breaker of rest."

"Ca-lack! even what Cockatoo has said of Kauwa is true," declared the Adjutant, solemnly, snapping his sword in its scabbard; "I, who am *the* cleaner of cities, consider Kauwa but a thief. Once many of the Seven Sisters, for that is the evil name of Kauwa's tribe, stole a full-flavored fish from my very teeth——"

"Aw, aw, aw! let me tell it, let me tell it," cried Kauwa; "let me tell the true tale of my solemn friend's stealing."

"Now we shall get at the real history of the Feathered Kind," chuckled Pardus. "When the Jungle Dwellers fall out amongst themselves and make much clatter, there is always the chance of an easy Kill."

"Caw-aw-aw! It was this way," fairly snapped Crow. "A seller of small things, a *box wallah*, walking in an honest way fast after the *palki* of a great Sahib, even on the Red Road of Calcutta, by chance was struck by another *palki* and his box of many things thrown to the ground. Then this honest one of the straight face, Adjutant, seeing the mishap from his perch on the lion which is over the Viceroy's gate, swooped down like a proper Dacoit and swallowed some brown Eating which was like squares of butter, and made haste back to his perch. Even a Crow would have known better than that, for it was soap. And all day many of the Men-kind stood and looked at our baldheaded friend, for a great sickness came to him; and as he coughed, soap-bubbles floated upward. The Hindoos said it was a work of their gods."

"Just what I thought," grunted Pardus; "all clatter, and no true story of anything."

"Well," sighed Cockatoo wearily, "my Mem-Sahib always put me in a little house on the veranda at night. Though I didn't like it at all, still it was *my* house, and one day, in the midst of a rain, when I sought to enter, inside were two of the Cat young."

"AND AS HE COUGHED, SOAP BUBBLES FLOATED UPWARD."

"Kittens?" queried Sa'-zada.

"Ee-he-ah; and just behind me the old Cat with another in her mouth. Hard nuts! but such a row you never heard in your life. When I tried to drag the Kittens out, the Cat dug her beak——"

"Claws, you mean," corrected Sa'-zada.

"Ee-he-ah—claws in my back; but the Mem-Sahib took them away."

"Ugh, ugh! all lies! Bird talk!" grunted Boar. "What say you, Sa'-zada?"

"It is true," declared the Keeper, much to the disgust of his questioner; "for in The Book are also other true tales of Cockatoo. The Mem-Sahib has written that he was a great mischief-maker. She says that on the back veranda of her bungalow was a filter, and when 'Cocky' wanted a bath, he used to turn the tap, but never knew enough to shut it off, so the filter was always running dry.

"Also, there was a guava tree in the compound, and our friend ate all the guavas just as they ripened, so no one but Cocky got any of the fruit. That he was always fighting with Jock, her Scotch Terrier, and the clamor fair made her head ache."

"Whatever Sa'-zada reads from The Book is most certainly true," commented Magh.

"I've been thinking," began the Adjutant, solemnly——

"You look like it," growled Wolf.

"Of a story about Kauwa," continued the Adjutant——

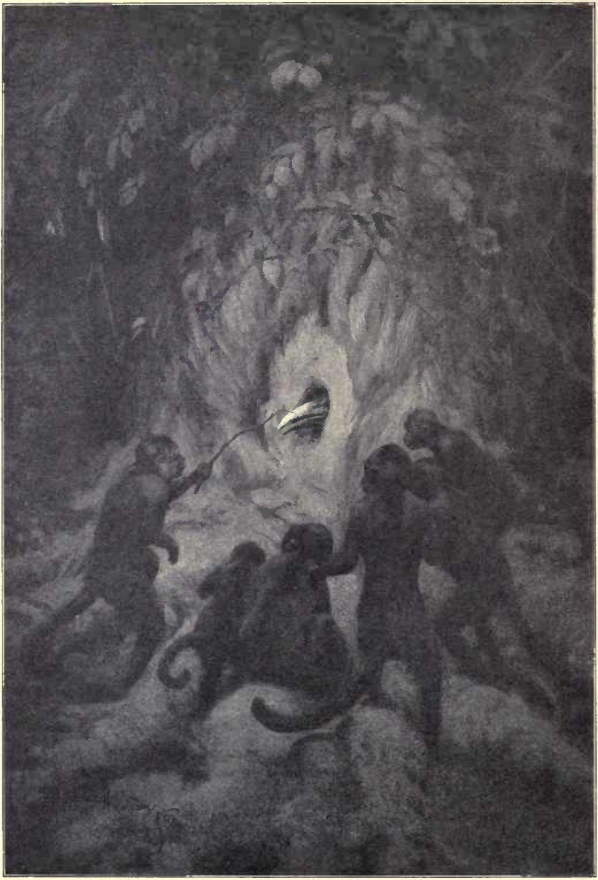
"He stole three silver spoons from my Mem-Sahib," interrupted Cocky hastily, suddenly remembering the incident, "and hid them in the Dog-cart, where they were found next day; which shows that he is neither wise nor honest."

"Mine is a true tale," declared Adjutant, with great dignity. "One morning, looking calmly over the great city to see that all had been tidied up, I saw my little black friend, whose voice is like unto the squeak of a Bullock-cart, crouched in an open window, with wings well spread ready for flight.

"'A new piece of thieving,' thought I, and, drawing closer, I saw Kauwa hop to the floor, pass over to a bed on which slept a Sahib, and gently take a slice of toast from the top of a cup; then away went the thief.

"But the full wickedness was later, for when the Sahib awoke he spoke to his servant in the manner which Cockatoo has related of the ship. And when the other, who was of the Black Kind, declared he had put the toast beside his Master, the Sahib beat him for a liar. Even three mornings did Kauwa take the toast; but on the fourth the Sahib, who was pretending to sleep, nearly broke his back with the cast of a boot."

"Jungle Dwellers are Jungle Dwellers, and City Dwellers are City Dwellers," commenced Hornbill, gravely, "and I'm so glad I'm a Jungle Dweller. These tales show what city life is like.



"LEAVING JUST A PLACE FOR HER SHARP BEAK."

Save for an occasional row with Magh's friends, Hanuman and the rest, whose stomachs are out of all proportion to the quantity of fruit to be had, I have led a very peaceful life in the Jungle."

"Tell me," queried Magh, maliciously, "do your Young roost on your nose?"

"No; that is to keep inquisitive folks at a distance. And, talking of Young, when my wife has laid her two big eggs in a hole in some tree, I shut her up there with the eggs—make her stay home to mind the house and the oncoming family. I plaster up the hole with mud, leaving just a place for her sharp beak; this to keep the Monkeys from stealing her and the eggs."

"Kaw-aw-aw! Talking of nests," said Kauwa, "when I was in Calcutta I designed a nest that would last forever—yes, forever. Each year before that time, because of the monsoon winds, my nest had always been destroyed; but the time I speak of, having a job on hand——"

"On beak, you mean!" laughed Sa'-zada.

"Aw-haw!—to clean up about a cook-house behind a certain place of the Sahib's in which they bottled water of a fierce strength—as I say, being busy in this same compound, I spied many, many twigs of wire."

"What's wire?" asked Mooswa; "I've never, that I know of, eaten such twigs."

Sa'-zada explained, "Kauwa means bottled soda water, I fancy, and the wire from the corks."

"A thought came to me," continued Kauwa, "to build my nest of these bright little things, and I did, first getting my mate's opinion on the matter, of course. Dead Pigs! but it *was* a nest! We would swing, and jump, and hang to it by our beaks, and never a break in the wall. But I had forgotten all about the selfish desire of the Men —but that was after. The first trouble was when Cuckoo—a proper *budmash* bird she is—came and laid two eggs in the nest. I saw the difference in the eggs at once, but my mate declared that they were all her own laying. She took rather a pride in her ability to lay eggs—to tell you the truth, we quarreled over it."

"I believe that," yawned Adjutant.

"However, she had her way, and started to hatch out these foreign devils; but the Men, as I have said, seeing my beautiful nest, sent a Man of low caste up the tree, and he took it away, Cuckoo eggs and all. It was a good joke on the Cuckoo Bird, and I was so mad at the way everything turned out, Caw-ha! I never made it again."

"I can swallow a plantain at one gulp," said Hornbill proudly.

"Why do you toss it up first?" asked Sa'-zada, alluding to the peculiar habit the Hornbill has of throwing everything into the air, and catching it as he swallows it.

"It's all in the way of slow eating," answered Hornbill.

"Now," said Myna, "it is surely my turn. I, Myna, who was the pride of the Calcutta Zoo in the matter of speech, have sat here like a Tucktoo not saying a word, and listening to such as Cockatoo boasting about the few paltry oaths he picked up from the Sailor-kind. Why, damn your eyes, sir——"

And before Sa'-zada could still the tumult, Cockatoo and Myna, the best talking Bird of all India, were hurling the most unparliamentary language at each other that had ever been bandied about a Bird gathering.

When Sa'-zada had stopped the indelicate scolding of the two Birds Myna proceeded to tell of his life.

"I was born in the Burma hills, amongst the Shans. That's where I got my beautiful blue-black coat and lovely yellow beak."

"Modest Bird," sneered Magh.

"It was Mah Thin who snared me; but she was good to me, though—rice and fruit, all I could eat; and she never once forgot to put the turmeric and ground chillies in my rice; for, you know, if I did not get something hot in my food I'd soon die. I was somewhat like Cockatoo in that a Ship-man bought me and took me to Calcutta. He made me a most wise bird, and taught me many clever sayings. And when he was in Calcutta with his ship I would be put in the Zoo, so that the Sahibs from all parts might hear my speech.

"One day Tom—that was my master's name; he taught me to call him Tom—said to me, 'To-morrow the *Lat* Sahib, the Sirdar, and many ladies are coming to hear you talk; Myna.' Then he made me repeat over and over again, 'Good-morning, your Excellency.' "

"It was a hard word he gave you," commented Magh.

"It was indeed. Let claw-nosed Cockatoo try it; he thinks he can talk—let him try that."

"Avast there, you lubber——" commenced Cocky, but Sa'-zada stopped him.

"Well, I said it over and over, and over again, and Tom was so pleased he gave me a graft mango to eat. Next day the Viceroy and many Mem-Sahibs and Sahibs gathered about my cage, and the Viceroy said, 'Good-morning, Polly.' Now this made me mad—to be called Polly, as though I had a hooked nose like Cockatoo; and in my anger I got excited, and, for-the-love-of-hot-spiced-rice, I couldn't think of what Tom had told me to say.

" 'Speak up!' said Tom.

"In my anger, and forgetting the other thing, and seeing so many strange faces against the very bars of my cage, I blurted out, 'I'll see you damned first!' just as the sailors used to teach me."

"Caw-haw-haw-haw! Very funny, indeed. Next to a fat bone, or the hiding of a silver spoon, I like a joke myself," commented Kauwa. "Once at the first edge of the Hot Time I went to Simla.

That was also at the time of the going of the Sahibs, but after Calcutta it was dull—fair stupid.

"One morning, as I was feeling most lonesome, I spied a long row of queer little Donkeys standing with their tails to a fence. They had brought loads of brick. I flew to the fence, and reaching far down, pulled the tail of my first Donkey. Much food! but he did kick—it made me laugh. I pulled the tale of every Donkey of the line, and when I had finished there wasn't a board left on the fence. Then the Man who was master of the fence, and the one that was master of the Donkeys, fought over this matter, and pulled each about by the feathers that were on their heads. It was the only real pleasant day I had in Simla."

"Did-you-do-it!" screamed the Redwattled Lapwing, suddenly roused to animation by falling off Mooswa's back, where he had been trying to balance himself with his poor front-toed feet.

"Caw-w-w! I did; and for three grains of corn I'd pull your tail, too."

"I wasn't speaking to you," retorted Titiri the Lapwing; "I was dreaming of my old home in India—dreaming that the hunters had come into the rice fields to shoot the poor Paddy Birds and Bakula (Egret) for their feathers."

"Murderers, you should call them, not Hunters," exclaimed Hathi. "It makes me sniff in my nose now when I think of the Birds I've seen murdered, just for their feathers."

"It's an outrageous shame," declared Sa'-zada.

"I did all I could," asserted Lapwing. "When I saw the Gun-men coming, sneaking along, crouched like Pardus——"

"Sneaking like Pardus—go on, Good Bird!" chimed in Magh.

"I flew just ahead of them, and cried 'Tee-he-he! Here come the Murderers!' so that every bird in all the *jhils* about could hear me. And when Bakula, and Kowar the Ibis, and all the others had flown to safety, I shouted, 'Did-you-do-it, did-you-do-it!' Then the Men used language much like the disgraceful talk we have had from Cocky and Myna to-night."

"You carried a heavy responsibility," remarked Sa'-zada.

"All lies," sneered Kauwa. "Fat Bones! why, he can't even sit on the limb of a tree."

"That is because of my feet," sighed Lapwing. "I have no toes behind."

"Where do you sleep?" asked Magh.

"On the ground," answered Lapwing.

"That's so," declared Sa'-zada, "for the Natives of the East say that Titiri sleeps on his back, and holds up the sky with his feet."

"But why should the Men kill Birds for a few feathers?" croaked Vulture. "I don't believe it. Nobody asked me for one of mine. In fact the great trouble of all eating is the feathers or skin."

"Whe-eh-eh!" exclaimed Ostrich, disgustedly.

"Pheu! your feathers! Even your head looks like a boiled Lobster. They do not kill me—the Men—but I know they are crazy for feathers, for they pull mine all out. Some day I'll give one of them a kick that will cure him of his feather fancy. I did rake one from beak to feet once with my strong toe nail. When I bring a foot up over my head and down like this——"

As Ostrich swung his leg every one skurried out of the way, for they knew it was like a sword descending.

"Yes," cried Magh, "if you only had a brain the size of that toe-nail——"

"Stop it!" cried Sa'-zada, for this was an unpleasant truth; Ostrich, though such a huge fellow himself, has a brain about the size of a Humming Bird's.

"Talking of Wives," said Ostrich, with the most extraordinary irrelevance, "mine died when I was twenty-seven years old; and, of course, as it is the way with us Birds, I never took up with another, though I've seen the most beautifully feathered ones of our Kind—quite enough to make one's mouth water.

"She had queer ways, to be sure—my wife. As you all know, our way of hatching eggs is turn about, the Mother Birds sitting all day, while we Lords of the Nest sit at night. But my wife would take notions sometimes and not sit at all. In that case I always sat night and day until the job was

finished. By-a-sore-breast-bone! but making a nest in the hard-graveled desert is a job to be avoided."

"Sore knuckles!" exclaimed Magh, "where are we at? We were talking of feathers."

"So we were, so we were," decided Mooswa. "And what I want to know is, do the Men eat the feathers they hunt for?"

"Oh, Jungle Dwellers!" exclaimed Magh; "if you were to sit in my cage for half a day you would see what they do with them. The Women come there with their heads covered with all kinds of feathers, red, and green, and blue—Silly! how would I look with my head stuck full of funny old feathers?"

"Like the Devil!" exclaimed Sa'-zada.

"Like a Woman," retorted Magh. "And their hair is so pretty, too. I've seen red hair just like mine, and then to cover it up with a crest of feathers like Cockatoo wears; I'd be ashamed of the thing."

"It's a sin to murder the Birds," whimpered Mooswa; "that's the worst part of it."

"Tonk, tonk, tonk!" came a noise just like a small Boy striking an iron telegraph post with a stick. It was the small Coppersmith Bird clearing his throat. Very funny the green pudgy little chap looked with his big black mustaches.

"The Men are great thieves," he asserted. "When I was a chick my Mother taught me to

stick my tail under my wings for fear they would steal the feathers as I slept."

"Steal tail feathers!" screamed Eagle; "I should say they would. Out in the West, where was my home, when a Man becomes a great Chief he sticks three of my tail feathers in his hair; and when the Head Chief of a great Indian tribe rises up to make a big talk, what does he hold in his hand? The things that are bright like water-drops——"

"Diamond rings," exclaimed Sa'-zada, interrupting.

"No; he holds one of my wings to show that he is great."

"Yes, you are the King Bird, Eagle," concurred Sa'-zada, "the emblem of our country."

"I can break a lamb's back with my talons," assented Eagle, ignoring the sublime disdainfully, "but I wouldn't trust my nest within reach of any Man—they're a lot of thieves."

"Nice feathers are a great trouble," asserted Sparrow; "I'm glad I haven't any."

"What difference does it make?" cried Quail; "the Men kill me, and I'm sure I'm not gaudy."

"You're good eating, though," chuckled Gidar the Jackal. "After a day's shoot of the Men-kind, the scent from their cook-house is fair maddening. Oh-h-h, ki-yi! I've had many a Quail bone in my time."

"Even Lapwing can't save *us* from the Hunters," lamented Quail; "they play us such vile tricks.

I've seen a rice field with a dozen bamboos stuck in it, and on top of each bamboo a cage with a tame Cock Quail; and in the center, hidden away, sat a man with a little drum which he tapped with his fingers. And the drum would whistle 'peep, peep, peep,' and the Birds in the cages would go 'peep, peep, peep,' and we Cock Birds of the Jungle, thinking it a challenge to battle, would answer back, 'peep, peep, peep,' and go seeking out these strange Birds who were calling for fight. Of course, our Wives would go with us to see the battle, and in the end all would be snared or shot by the deceitful Men."

"That's almost worse than being taken for one's feathers," said Egret. "I'm glad they don't eat me."

"No Mussulman would eat you, Buff Egret," said Gidar the Jackal. "It's because of your habit of picking ticks off the Pigs."

"Some Birds do have vile habits," declared Crow. "Paddy Bird has a Brother in Burma who gets drunk on the Men's toddy."

"I doubt if that be true," said Sa'-zada, "though he is really called 'Bacchus' in the science books."

Said Myna, "Of all Birds, I think the Jungle Fowl are the worst. The Cocks do nothing but fight, fight, all the time—fight, and then get up in a tree and crow about it, as though it were to their credit."

Said Kauwa the Crow, "When one of our family

becomes quarrelsome, or a great nuisance, we hold a meeting—I have seen even a thousand Crows at such meetings—hear all there is to say about him, and then if it appears that he is utterly bad we beat him to death."

"Tub-full-of-bread!" exclaimed Hathi, sleepily, "it's my opinion that all Birds should be on their roosts—it's very late."

"And roost high, too," said Magh, "for Coyote and Gidar have been licking their chops for the last hour. I've watched them. And lock Python up, O Sa'-zada, for high roosts won't save them from him."

"All to bed, all to bed!" cried the Keeper. "Tomorrow night we'll have some more tales."

The last cry heard on the sleepy night air after all were safely in their cages was Cockatoo's "Avast there, you lubber!" as Myna, sticking his saucy yellow beak through the bars of his cage, called across to him, "Want a glass of grog, Polly?"

Eighth Night

The Stories of Buffalo and Bison

EIGHTH NIGHT

THE STORIES OF BUFFALO AND BISON

THIS evening the whole Buffalo herd had come out of the park to the meeting-place in front of Chita's cage; even their brother, the Indian Bison, was there, as also was the true Buffalo, Bos Bubalus.

Said Sa'-zada, opening his book: "We should learn much this evening, for Buffalo and Bison are to tell us of their lives. But first, let me put you all right as to their names. Those we have called Buffalo, from our own western prairies, are not Buffalo at all, but Bison, half-brother of Gaur, who also lives in India, where the true Buffalo comes from."

"It does not matter," said Buff, the prairie Bison, "it does not matter what I'm called, seems to me, for all my life I have been most badly treated. Why, it seems no time since I was a calf, one of a mighty herd, on the sweet-grassed prairie, and in those days I thought there was nothing in the world like being a Buffalo.

"The first touch of danger I remember came in

this way. The herd had tracked, one after another, all walking in the same narrow path, down to a hollow in which was water. I was feeling frisky, and, seeing something move, something that seemed very like a calf, smaller than myself, I ran after it, cocking my tail, kicking my heels in the air, and thinking it great sport; for, Comrades, the great weakness of all grass-feeders is an idle curiosity."

"And did all this happen when you had your tail kinked in the air, that time you were a silly calf?" jibed Magh, holding a peanut out on her under lip, and looking down at it very sedately, as though the subject were of little interest.

"I'll tell you my story in my own way," declared Buff. "The thing that I followed was like a grey shadow, and slipped about with no noise, but when I came close to it, with a vicious snarl it sprang up, and also there were three others hidden in the grass. Much milk! but I became afraid, and I believe I bawled. Just then I felt the ground tremble, and a dozen of the herd galloped towards me with their heads down. It was a wolf, and help came just in time, for the big fangs of the fierce brute cut my hind leg a little where he sought to hamstring me.

"Then Mother explained, first bunting me soundly with her forehead, then licking me with her coarse tongue, that these Wolves were always

following up the Herd, trying to catch a Calf, or sick Cow, or old Bull, to one side."

"We have Wolves in India, too," said Arna, "and Chita the Leopard, and Bagh the Tiger. Blood drinkers! but we have many enemies there; even Cobra will hardly get out of the way seeking to carry to one's blood his sudden death. There are no animals so ill used, I believe, as Buffalo.

"One has need of big Horns in the heart of the Jungle. Why, mine measure nine feet and a half from tip to tip across my forehead. And see the strength of them, fully the size of Bagh's leg—for I am a Curly Horn, which means one of great strength. Never have I locked Horns with a Bull that I have not twisted his neck till he bellowed. Eugh-hu, eugh! Next to lying in muddy water with one's nose just peeping out, there's nothing so pleasant as a trial of strength. And with all respect to Hathi's handiness of trunk, I must say I prefer good, stout Horns. When Bagh or Pardus come sneaking about, there's nothing like a long reach.

"Hear that, friends," said Magh. "Here's a traveler from Panther's own land calls him a sneak. He, he he! now we shall get at the truth."

"Yes," said Gaur, the Bison; "Panther and all his tribe are sneaks. They murdered a Calf of mine. To be sure, it was the Wife's Calf, for had I been there at the time I'd have fixed him. She had just lain down to rest for the night,

and the Calf was a little to one side, and this evil-spotted thing, Panther of the Red Kind, came sneaking up the wind like a proper Jungle Cat. He knew I was away, for he has the cunning of Cobra, and how was the mother to know that any danger threatened? He stole like a shadow close to the poor little Calf, and with a rush jumped on his back and bit his neck, breaking it, and cutting it so the red blood ran his life all out in a little while."

"I was born in Mardian," remarked Arna, the Buffalo, "many years ago; and save for the loss of a Calf, through Chita or Bagh's treachery, or perhaps a lone Cow at times, our herd feared no Dweller of the Jungles. Mine is a big family," he ruminated, "for we wander over almost all India and Burma. Before I had grown up our Bull leader had taught us all the method of battle. When it was Bagh, we formed up, heads out, with the Calves behind, and if we but saw him in time, he surely was slain, if he sought strongly for a Kill.

"I learned all the different sounds that come far ahead of danger. One's ears get wondrous sharp in the Jungle, I can tell you, where the little Gonds hunt. If a stone went singing down the hillside, that meant Men, and Men meant the worst kind of danger. No Animal starts a stone rolling; we are too careful for that.

"Also do the Jungle Dwellers not break sticks as they travel. The crack of a broken twig meant

Men Hunters; and when a beat was on, the Jungle was, indeed, possessed of great sounds. All the Dwellers ran mad with fear—the fear-madness that is like unto the way of Baola Kutta, the Mad Dog. There is nothing so terrible in the life of an Animal as the drive of the Hunters. 'Tap, tap, tap,' like the knocking of Horns together, meant the strike of Beaters against the trees, and then the Men's voices crying, '*Aree ho teri.*'

"I, who tremble not at the roar of a Tiger, shivered when I heard that, and lost all knowledge of which way I should run—that was in the first drive, of course, before I became possessed of much Jungle wisdom. Surely it drove us all mad. Like the sound of rain falling on leaves was the rush of Python's little feet as even he flew from the Man-danger.

"Our best food was down in the *jhils,* also the nice soft mud to lie in, and in the early spring, after the fires had passed, the young bamboo shot up and we ate them. Then when we took it into our heads, we went up into the deep, cool sal forest and rested in peace. But in the Dry Time was the time of danger, for we had to travel far to find water. We are not like Antelope or Nilgai, who go without water for days and days.

"I remember once when we had crept down out of the hills, leaving the big sal trees behind, and passing through tamarind, and mango, and pipal, and just as we were coming to the pool, which was

almost hidden in the jamin bushes, I heard a roar —there was a rush and a Bagh of ferocious strength sprang on one of our Cows and sought to break her neck.

"But worse than Bagh's cruel charge was the silent method of the little, dark Men-kind—the Mariahs. Like Magh's people, they would sit quiet in the trees, and as we came slowly back from the water would shoot arrows into us. Of this we could have no warning, neither any chance to fight for our lives, only the noise of the arrow coming like the hiss of King Cobra, and the cruel sting of its sharp end. Our Bull leader got one this way not strong enough to bring him to his death, and for days and days it stayed in his side, and made him of such a vile temper that the Herd had to cast him forth, and he became what is known as a Solitary Bull.

"There is some kindness in Bagh's method, more than in the way of these evil Men, for when he kills he kills, and there is no more sickness; but of the Men, when they hunt us with their arrows or a thunder-stick which strikes with a loud noise, many of our kind are struck and die at the end of much time.

"Strong as the fire-stick is——"

"Arna means by the fire-stick a gun," explained Sa'-zada.

"Strong as it is," continued Arna, "we Buffalo are also of great strength. Why, the skin

on my neck and withers would stop its strike any time."

"Stop the Bullet?" queried Sa'zada.

"Yes," asserted the Bull. "I have at least three buried in the thick skin of my neck, and I hardly know they are there. Why, it has been known in my Herd for a Bull to be struck fifteen times by one of these fire-sticks, and then the Men did not get him. But just behind the shoulders we are weak. My mother taught me a trick of this sort—'Never stand sideways to an enemy,' she told me. Yes, though it is good to be of great strength, a little wisdom is also of much use, even to a Buffalo."

"It was so with us," concurred Prairie Bison. "From all the other animals we suffered little compared with the misery that came from the Men—the Redmen; and worse still were the Palefaces; it was, as you say, Brother, all because of the fire-stick."

"Even I was struck by it," continued Arna; "it was this way. Early one morning I had gone down to a *jhil,* being alone at that time of the year, for our wives were busy with the Calves, and, as I was going to the uplands, to a favorite *nulla* of mine, in which to rest, suddenly I caught sight of an evil-faced Gond; these same Gonds being of all Shikaris (hunters) the most strong in their thirst for blood. I rushed away for the hills, thinking to leave him behind. I traveled far, and thought to

myself, now surely I have lost this small killer. Being hungry, I fed on the rich grass, but, as I fed, suddenly a dry twig broke in the Jungle, and I knew that it was either Hathi or the little Gond. Looking back, I saw with the Shikari another of a white face. Again I galloped, and trotted, and walked, up a long *nulla,* over a hill, around by the side of it, turned, and went far back, much the way I had come, only to one side. Then I sought the top of a hill where the bamboos grew thick, thinking to hide. As I rested, an evil smell, that was not of the Jungle, came to me as the wind turned in its course and blew up the hill. I stood perfectly still, even ceased to flap my ears against the wicked Flies. As I watched, suddenly this Man of the white face stood up from the grass just the shortest of gallops away, his thunder-stick roared, and something I could not see struck me most viciously in the shoulder. I was mad. Lashing my hips with my tail, and throwing my nose straight out, I charged him.

"Again his thunder-stick spoke loud, but there was no sting—nothing, and he turned from me and ran down the hill. Just as I was almost upon him, he looked back, his foot caught in a bush and he fell. Now, as I have said, my big Horns are of great use when Bagh charges, or when another Bull disputes the right to command the Herd, but as for the small enemy lying on the ground, I could not get at him at all; besides, I was rushing down

"SOMETHING I COULD NOT SEE STRUCK ME MOST VICIOUSLY IN THE SHOULDER."

hill at great speed, so, though I lowered my head till my forehead almost crushed him into the earth, yet I had him not on the Horns, as, carried by my weight, I was forced to the very bottom. Before I could turn he was up and away, and I never saw him again."

"We are also killed by the Men," added Muskwa, the Bear. "They take off our black coats, and I thought, perhaps, that was lest we might come to life again. Yes, I think they mean to kill all Animals."

"They have killed nearly all my people," sighed Prairie Cow—"nearly all of them. I know that is true, for one day Sa'-zada came into our corral, and, rubbing his nice soft hand on my forehead—I was sick that day, I remember—said, 'Poor old girl! we must take care of you, for there are not many of your sort left now.' Then he said it was a shame that the brutes had slaughtered us so."

"Ghurr-ah!" barked Wolf, "tell of this thing, O Buffalo Cow, for to me it has been much of a mystery where the many of your kind could have gone."

"Lu-ah!" sighed Prairie Cow, "it makes me sad to even think of it. As I have said, in my young life we were many, many in numbers like you have seen our enemies, the Men, here at times. All through the long, warm days of sun, we ate the grass that grew again as fast as we cropped it. Our humps became big and full of rich fat for the

cold time. Not that I had the hump on my back as a Calf, not needing it as food, for my mother's milk kept my stomach at peace when the winds were cold, and the grass perhaps under a white cover. Sometimes when the days were harsh we had to travel far in search of feed grass, but that was nothing: few of us died because of this. Even when the Red-faced ones sought us, they killed but few, for their hunger was soon stayed. But suddenly there came to us a time of much fear. Wherever we went we were chased by the Pale-faces, and their fire-sticks were forever driving the fire that kills into our faces. Our Bull leader was always taking us farther and farther away, and our Herd was getting smaller and smaller. It was a miserable life, for there was never any rest.

"At last our Bull said that we must go on a long trail, for the prairie wind was talking of nothing but danger; so we trailed far to the south. For days and days we passed across hot sand deserts in which there was little grass and hardly any drinking. It was terrible. My hump melted to nothing; we were all like that, worse than we had ever been after the coldest time of little sun.

"Then we came to a land in which there was grass and water, and none of the Men-kind; and once more we were content, only for thinking of our friends that had been killed. I don't remember how long we were there—I think I had raised

two Calves, when one day the evil that comes of the Men was once more with us——"

"Yes, it is even as I have said," interrupted Arna; "when one thinks he has got away safely, and stops for a little rest, he will see that evil Gond, or some other of the Men-kind, waiting to do him harm."

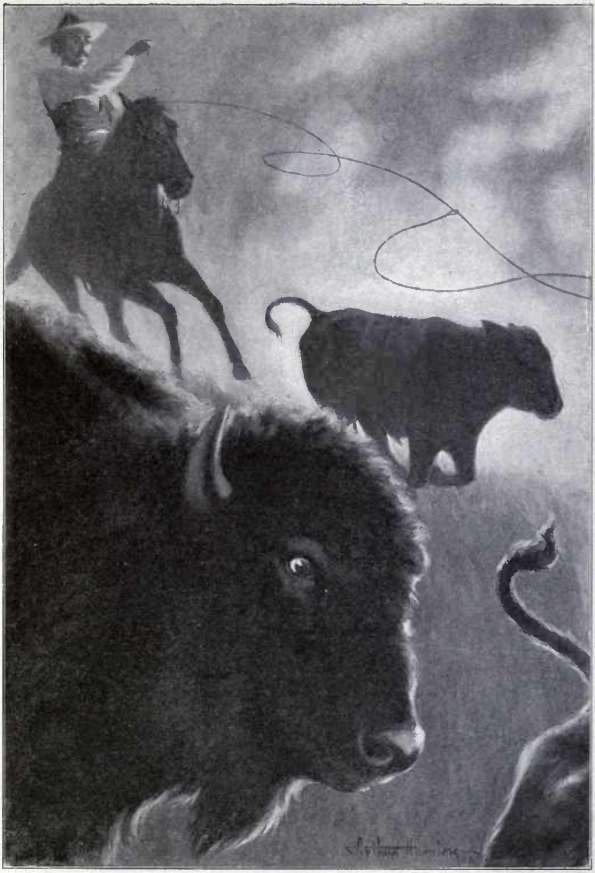
"Just so," commented Prairie Cow; "the Pale-faces had found us out. But I must say there was less use of the fire-sticks than before, and I soon came to know why they had trailed us across the Texas desert—they had come to steal our Calves. Never were any poor Animals so troubled by Man's evil ways as were we Buffalo. At first I thought they had not fire-sticks with them, and meant to kill and eat the Calves, they being less able to fight. I remember the very day my Calf was taken. As the Herd fed in a little valley, we saw three Wild Horses coming toward us—we thought they were Wild Horses, but it was an evil trick of the Palefaces, for beside each Horse walked one of the Men. They were down wind from us, so we did not discover this. Suddenly our Herd leader—he was a great Bull, too—gave a grunt of warning—much like Bear grunts, only louder; but still we could see nothing to put fear into our hearts. Then our leader commenced to throw sand up against his sides with his fore-feet, and, lowering his head, shook it savagely. 'Why does he wish to battle?' I wondered, for

the Wild Horses had never made trouble for my people.

"Just then the Men jumped on their animals, and away we raced. I remember as I ran wondering why there was no loud bark of the fire-stick, for I could see the Hunters galloping fast after us; in fact one of them was close at my heels, for my youngest Calf, not two months old, could not run as swiftly as I wished. I was keeping him close; and on my other side galloped my Calf that was a year old.

"Suddenly I heard a 'swisp' in the air, and my little curly-haired pet gave a choking gasp and fell in the grass. Of course, I could not stop at once, and he bawled much as I did when the Wolf was at my hock. When I turned in great haste I saw the Paleface on top of him. I was just crazy with rage. I charged full at the Man and his Horse, and it almost makes me laugh now to think how I kept him jumping about. He did use a small fire-stick on me, but I am sure it was because of the Man-fear, of which Hathi told us; I saw it in his eyes plain enough. But who can stand against the fire-stick? Not even Bagh or Hathi, as we know, so I was forced to flee with the Herd.

"We galloped far, far, before we stopped; and that night there were many mothers in the Herd bawling and crying for their lost Calves, for these evil Men had stolen a great number. I felt so sad thinking of my little one's trouble that I could stand



"SUDDENLY I HEARD A 'SWISP' IN THE AIR, AND MY LITTLE CURLY-HAIRED PET . . ."

it no longer, so I went back on our trail, and, following up the scene of the Men-kind, came to where they had my Calf and the others. It was night. I soon found him, for a Cow Mother's nose is most wise when looking for her young. But I could not get him away with me, for he was held fast by something; so I stayed there and let him drink of my milk.

"Even with the fear of a fire-stick on me I stayed with him, and in the morning when the Pale-faces saw me their eyes were full of much wonder. But I did not try to run away, and one of them, making many motions and noises to the other two, I think, commanded them not to harm me. Well, good Comrades," sighed the Cow, regretfully, "mine has been a very long story, I'm afraid, but when one talks of her Babe there is so much to be said."

"And did they bring you here with the Calf?" asked Magh.

"Most surely," answered Prairie Cow; "and because of my milk he grew big and strong, much faster than grew the other Calves, and is now big Bull of the Herd."

"But how fared the others with no mothers?" asked Chita.

"They gave them Cow mothers of the tame kind," answered the Cow.

Said Arna, scratching his back with the point of his long horn: "It is not quite this way with

us in India. We stick pretty well to the *jhils* and Jungles, so the Men cannot kill many of us at one time; but still we are becoming fewer. Even those of the black kind now have the thunder-stick, and kill my comrades to sell their heads to the horn merchants. Think of that, Brothers, having a price on one's head, like a Bhil robber."

Said Sa'-zada: "I wish all the Men who slay Animals, calling it sport, might have sat here to-night with us, that their hearts might be inclined more kindly toward you, Brothers, who war not against my kind."

"Sa'-zada," cried Hathi, in a gentle voice, "could you not put all these things in a new book, and lend it to each one of your people so that they might know of these true things? Surely then they would not seek for the life of each one of us that has done them no harm."

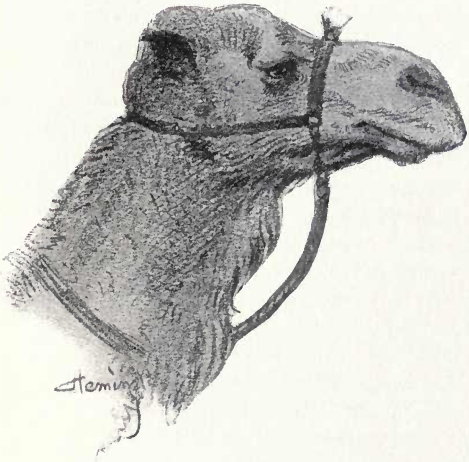
"I have a notion to try it, good Comrade," said the Keeper. "But in the meantime it is late, and now you must all go back to your corrals and cages."

"Good-night, Prairie Cow," trumpeted Hathi, softly, caressing her forehead with his trunk; "your people most certainly have been badly treated by the Men."

Soon silence reigned over the home of these outcasts from the different quarters of the world.

Ninth Night

The Story of Unt, the Camel



Herring

NINTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF UNT THE CAMEL

THE clink of a loose chain; the complaining wail of a swinging iron door; the squeak of a key turning an unwilling lock—a heavy-bolted lock; a flutter of wings; the crunch of giant feet on the echoing gravel; huge forms slipping through the moonlight, like prehistoric monsters; a slim, ribbon-like body gliding noiselessly over the grass cushion of the Park's sward; muffled laughter, bird calls and a remonstrative grunt from Wild Boar; the merry chatter of Magh the Orang; a guarded "Phrut-t-t, Phrut-t-t" from Hathi, the huge Elephant—ah, yes, all these; surely it was the gathering of old friends, who, like the listeners of the Arabian Night's tales, had for many evenings talked of their Jungle life in front of Black Panther's cage.

"You are all welcome," growled Pardus.

Magh hopped on the end of Hathi's trunk, and the latter lifted her gracefully to a seat on his broad forehead. She had Blitz, the Fox Terrier, with her. "You will hear some lies to-night, Pup," she

confided to him. "But who is to talk?" she asked suddenly; "Chee-he! Sa'-zada, our good Keeper, who's to talk?"

"Camel is to tell us of his life," answered the Keeper.

"That stupid creature, who is too lazy to brace up and look spry, talk to us? Next we know we'll have a tale from Turtle."

"That's it," sneered Boar, "if one is honest and a plodder like Unt, bandy-legged creatures like Magh will call him stupid."

Unt, with a bubbling grunt, knelt down, doubled his hind legs under him like a jack-knife, made himself comfortable, and commenced his personal history.

"Bul-lul-luh!" he muttered. "I was born in Baluchistan, on the nice white sand plains of the Sibi *Put* (desert). As Mooswa has said, there must be some great Animal who arranges things for us. Think of it, Comrades, I had the good fortune to be born in just the loveliest spot any animal could wish for. As far as I could see on every side was the hot, dry sand of the beautiful Sibi desert."

"I know," interrupted Ostrich; "my home in Arabia was like that. I've listened to Arna here, and Bagh, telling of the thick Jungles where one could scarce see three lengths of his own body, and I must say that I think it very bad taste."

"Yes, it was lovely there," bubbled Unt. "No wonder that Bagh, when he was chased by the

Beaters, fled to the sand *damar* and hid in the korinda thorns. Such sweet eating they are, firm under one's teeth. The green food is dreadful stuff. Once crossing the Sibi *Put,* when I was three days without food, I remember coming to Jacobabad, a place where the foolish ones of the Men-kind had planted trees, and bushes, and grass, and kept them green with water. I ate of these three green things, and nearly died from a swelling in my stomach.

"Well, as I have said, I was born in that nice sand place, and for three or four years did nothing but follow mother Unt about. Then they put a button in my nose, and tied me with a cord to the tail of another Unt, and put merchandise on my back for me to carry. There was a long line of us, and in front walked Dera Khan, the Master. We seemed to be always working, always carrying something; our only rest was when we were being loaded or unloaded. We were made to lie down when the packs were put on our backs, and many a time I have got up suddenly when the boxes were nearly all on, rose up first from behind, you know, and sent the things flying over my head. I would get a longer rest that way, but also I got much abuse, though I didn't mind it, to be sure; for, as Mooswa has said, our way of life is all arranged for us, and the abuse that was thrust upon me was a part of my way.

"But one year there came to Sibi many Men of

the war-kind, and with them were the black ones from Bengal. It was a fat one of this kind, one of little knowledge of the ways of an Unt, a 'Baboo,' Dera Khan called him, who caused me much misery. It was my lot to take him and his goods to the Bolan Pass, so Dera said, for the One-in-Charge, a Sahib, had so ordered it. When I sought to rise, as usual, when the load was but half in place, he got angry and beat me with a big-leafed stick he carried to keep the heat from his head. But in the end I brought to his knowledge the method of an Unt who has been beaten without cause.

"When all his pots and pans, and boxes of books, wherein was writing, had been bound to my saddle, the Baboo clambered on top. I must say that I could understand little of his speech, for my Master, Dera Khan, was a Man of not many words, but the Baboo was as full of talk as even Magh is; and of very much the same intent, too—of little value."

"Big lip! Crooked neck! Frightener of Young!" screamed Magh, hurling the epithets at Camel with vindictive fury.

"Unt's tale is truly a most interesting one; there is much wit in his long head," commented Pardus. Camel rolled the cud in his mouth three or four times, dropped his heavy eyelids reflectively, bubbled a sigh of meek resignation and proceeded:

"When I rose from behind, the Baboo nearly

fell over my neck; when I came sharply to my fore-feet (for I was always a very spry, active Unt), he declared to Dera Khan that I had broken his back. But I knew this couldn't be true, for I was always a most unlucky Unt. Of course, this time I was not tied to the tail of a mate, but my leading line was with the Baboo. He shouted 'Jao' to me, and in addition called me the Son of an Evil Pig.

"Have any of you ever seen one of my kind run away?" Camel asked, swinging his big head inquiringly about the circle.

"I have," answered Black Panther. "Once, being hungry, I crept close to an Unt to ask him if he could tell me where I might find a Chinkara or other Jungle Dweller for my dinner. I saw *that* Camel run. For a small part of the journey I was on his back; but though I can cling to anything pretty well, yet the twists of his long legs were too much for me, and I landed on my head in the sand, nearly breaking my back."

"Well," resumed Camel, "you will understand how the Baboo and his pots and pans fared when I ran away with him, which I did as soon as Dera Khan moved a little to one side. At first I couldn't get well into my stride, for the Baboo pulled at the nose rope, and called to Dera in great fear. Dera also ran beside me, holding to the ropes that were on the boxes; many things fell, coming away like cocoanuts from a tree. An iron pot going down with much speed struck my Master on his head, and

he said the same fierce words that he always used when I caused him trouble of any kind.

"You know, though I ran fast, yet by tipping my head a little to one side I could see what was doing behind, and I saw a basket in which were many round, white things——"

"Eggs," suggested Cockatoo. "Those were the round white things Potai brought from bazaar in a basket."

"Yes, they were in a basket," repeated Camel, solemnly; "so, as you say, Cocky, I suppose they were eggs; but, however, they came down all at once on the face and shoulders of my loved Master."

"And broke, Cah-cah-cah!" laughed Kauwa the Crow; "I know. More than once I've seen relatives of mine have their eggs broken through being thrown out of the nest by Cuckoo Bird."

"As I have said," continued Camel, "my Master was a Man of few words, but at this he let go of the rope, and the language he used still rings in my ears. Dry chewing! how I fled. And behind chased Dera Khan, a big knife in his hand—in spite of his violence I had to laugh at the color the eggs had left on his long beard—a knife in his hand, and crying aloud that he would cut the Baboo's throat.

"As I swung first one side of my legs, and then the other over the sweet sand desert, I could feel the Baboo thumping up and down on my back, for

"I REMAINED IN THE JHIL UNTIL MY MASTER HAD LOST THE FIERCE KILL-LOOK."

he was clinging to the saddle with both hands. Sometimes he abused me, and sometimes he begged me to stop; that I was a good Unt—his Father and Mother, and his greatest friend. As he would not be shaken off because of his fear of Dera Khan's knife, I carried him into a *jhil* of much water; there he was forced to let go, and when he got to the bank, if it had not been for a Sahib he would most surely have been killed by my Master. Hathi has told us of the fear-look he has seen in the faces of the Men-kind, and there was much of this in the eyes of that Baboo. I remained in the *jhil* until my Master had lost the fierce kill-look, then I came out, and save for some of the old abuse there was nothing done to me.

"But we all went to the Bolan Pass, carrying food for those that labored there making a path for the Fire Caravan, the bearer of burdens that is neither Bullock, nor Unt, nor aught that I know of."

"It was a railroad," Sa'-zada, the Keeper, explained.

"Perhaps," grunted Unt, licking his pendulous upper lip; "perhaps, but we Unts spoke of it as the Fire Caravan. Still it was an evil thing, a destroyer of lives, many lives, for never in that whole land of sand-hills and desert was there so much heat and so much death.

"First the *Bail* (Bullocks) died as though Bagh the Killer had taken each one by the throat; then

those of my kind fell down by the fire-path and could not rise again. And the air, that is always so sweet on the hot sand plains, became like the evil breath of the place wherein nests Boar."

"Ugh, ugh!" grunted Wild Boar, "even there, by this stupid tale of Unt's, there was something evil to be likened to my kind."

"The water that had been sweet ran full of a sickness because of all this, and the Men that drank of it were stricken with the Black Death. At first it was those of the Black-kind, and then the others, the Sahibs, became possessed of it. And then the Burra-Sahib, Huzoor the Governor, was taken with it; so said one of the Sahibs who came to Dera Khan just as he was tying a rope about my fore-leg so that I could not rise and wander in the night.

" 'It is sixty miles to Sibi,' this Sahib, who was but young, said to my Master.

" 'By the Grace of Allah, it is more,' Dera answered him.

" 'The Big Sahib, who is my friend, is stricken with the Black Death,' said the young Sahib, 'and also the Baboo Doctor is the same, being close to his death; and unless I get a Healer from Sibi tomorrow, the Sahib who is my friend will surely die.'

" 'If Allah wills it so, Kismet,' answered my Master.

" 'Have you a fast Camel?' asked the young Sahib.

" 'This is Moti,' replied my Master, putting his hand on my hump, 'and when he paces, the wind remains behind.'

"Then the young Sahib promised my Master many rupees and much work for the other Unts, so be it he might ride me to Sibi for a Doctor.

"By a meal of brown paper such as one picks up in a bazaar, I swear that I understood more of what that meant to my Master than many a Camel would have known, for had I not seen it all, this that I am about to tell? You know, Comrades, that the Burra-Sahib was a Man of a dry temper, and it so happened that one day Dera Khan had displeased him, which I just say was a way my Master had often. That was a full moon before the coming of the Black Sickness. Oh, Friends, but I had seen it all; it made me tremble, knowing of the readiness with which Dera Khan argued with his knife, like unto the manner of Pathans.

"The Big Sahib would have struck my Master but for this same young Sahib who had now come with his offer of many rupees—this Sahib who had been there at that time. So, Comrades, there was *good* hate for the sick man in Dera's heart.

" 'Will you send the Camel?' said the young Sahib; and Dera, drawing himself up straight, even as I do under a heavy load, held out his hand and said, 'Allah! thou art a Man. My goods are your goods, but for the other, the one who is your friend and my enemy, the wrath of Allah upon him.'

"The Sahib was on my back in a little.

"I have said before that with the Baboo and many kettles on my back I ran fast, but think you, Comrades, of the weight, and also of the poor rider, for there is nothing an Unt dislikes so much as the knock, knock, against his hump of one having no knowledge of proper pace. How the Sahib sat! Close as a pad that had been tied on; and he coaxed and urged—even swore a little at times, but not after an unreasoning manner as had the Baboo. He called me a Bikaneer, even his Dromedary, which means one of great speed; and begged me, if I wished food for all time, to hasten. How we fled in the long night, down the hot paths, splashing many times through the cool water that crossed our path—Bolan River, it is called, the water that comes from the high-reaching sand lands that are all white on their tops."

"The snow mountains," explained Sa'-zada, for Camel's description was more or less vague.

"As I have said," continued Camel, "the water was cool. Never once did I fall, though the round stones were like evil things that twist at one's feet to bring him down. 'Hurry, hurry, hurry!' the young Sahib called to me, and I laughed, thinking he would tire before I should.

"On we went, passing little fires where those of the Cooly kind rested as they fled from the Black Death. Just as we came out on the flat sand which is the Sibi Desert, there were gathered in one place

many Men. For a space we stopped, and my Rider asked if there was a Healer with them. They answered that they were Men of the war-kind going up to keep the workers from running away from the Black Death; even those at the little fires would be turned back, they said.

"Then on again I raced. I could hear my Rider talking back to his friend, the Burra-Sahib, who lay stricken with the evil sickness, though I know not how he could hear him, for we were full half way to Sibi.

" 'Keep up your courage, Jack,' he would say, speaking to his Friend. 'Please God, I'll have a Surgeon there in time to save you yet.'

"Then he would fall to abusing some other of the Men-kind, perhaps he was not a friend, whom he blamed for all that was wrong. 'You puffed-up beast,' he would say, speaking to this other, 'to send a lot of Men to such a death hole with a brute of a Bengali-Baboo to doctor them—murder them, and a medicine chest that was emptied in a day. It's a bit of luck that Baboo died, but it doesn't help matters much.'

"That was the Baboo I had run away with; perhaps even the medicine chest had lost much through its fall from my back.

"Then to me, 'Hurry, hurry, hurry! Shabaz!' (push on); then to his Friend, 'Poor old Man, Jack! what will *She* say if I don't pull you out of

this? I'll never go back to England as long as I live if this beastly thing snuffs you out.'

"Then to the other, the one who had done this evil: 'Curse you, with your red tape economy! You're a C. I. E.'—whatever that meant I don't know—'but you've murdered old Jack, who is a Man. You're out of this trouble up at Simla, but you'll roast for this yet.'

"You know, Comrades," said Unt, plaintively, "I didn't know all about this thing—I couldn't understand it, you see, being an Unt, and, as Magh says, stupid; but someway I felt like doing my best for the young Sahib who did not make me cross by beating me, but only cried 'Hurry! Shabaz! my swift runner,' and shook a little at the nose line in his haste."

"I have often felt that way," encouraged Hathi; "once I remember, it was in Rangoon, that time I was working in the timber yards. I had a Mahout who never stuck the sharp iron goad in my head at all. He always told me everything I was to do by different little knocks on my ears with his knees as he sat on my neck. And also by soft speech, of course, for, as you say, Unt, it keeps one from getting cross, or filled with fear, and so one has only to think of what the Master requires. You were right to run fast with such a rider."

"This is Camel's story," pleaded Sa'-zada.

"Never mind," bubbled Unt; "I was just trying to remember what time we got to Sibi—I know

"BUT SOME WAY I FELT LIKE DOING MY BEST."

it was before the sands grew hot from the sun. Straight to the *Teshil* (Government office) the young Sahib rode me. Here he made an orderly bring me food and drink while he went quick to bring a Healer for his Friend. I had scarce time to store half the *raji* away for future cud-chewing, when back he came with a Healer of the White Kind.

"Now, the *Teshildar,* who was Chief of Sibi, was a slow-motioned Man, not given to hurry; that was because the hump on his stomach was large with the fat of great eating; and when the Sahib asked for another Unt to carry the Healer, this Man who was Chief made no haste—not at first; but when the young Sahib, no doubt thinking of his friend Jack, threatened him with the wrath of the Governor, also the smaller anger of his own fists, the *Teshildar* had an Unt of great speed quickly brought forth. Then the young Sahib, speaking to me, said, 'My heavy-eyed Friend, also one of much strength, can you go straight back the sixty miles?'

"Of course, at that time I couldn't speak in his words, though I could understand, so I just shook myself, and stretched out my long hind legs, as much as to say, 'Mount to my back, and I will try.'

"We started, the Healer on the other Unt, and the Sahib on my back. I shall never forget that ride. Sore legs! but at first it was not easy to keep up with my Comrade, who was fresh; but also was he a trifle like the *Teshildar,* fat in the hump, so in

the end that had its effect, and I managed to keep pace with him.

"We reached back in the Bolan just as the sun was straight over our heads. By the *raji* that was still in my gullet I was tired; so was the young Sahib, for when I knelt down, and he slipped quickly from my back, he spun round and round like a box that has broken loose, and came to the ground in haste. Just as he fell, Dera Khan caught him, and lifted him up; then he and the Healer went to the tent where was his friend Jack. And I heard my Master, Dera, say afterward, that the little Sahib never slept while it was twice dark and twice light; that was until the Healer said the stricken one, Jack, the Burra-Sahib, was again free of the Black Death."

"I think it is a true tale," remarked Adjutant, putting down his left leg and taking up his right. "I have seen much of this Black Death in my forty years of life, and the Men of the White-kind take great care of each other. Now, those of the Black-kind get the Man-fear which Hathi has spoken of, in their eyes, and flee fast from this terrible sickness, crying aloud that their livers have turned to water. I, myself, though I am a bird of little speech, could tell tales of both methods."

"But what became of you, Unt?" queried Magh; "did you catch this sickness and die?"

"No," replied Camel, solemnly, not noticing the sarcasm; "the little Sahib took me from Dera Khan

by a present of silver, and kept me to ride on, and in the end I was sent here to Sa'-zada."

"It's bed-time," broke in the Keeper; "let each one go quickly to his cage or corral."

Tenth Night

The Story of Big Tusk, the Wild Boar

TENTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF BIG TUSK, THE WILD BOAR

'TWAS the tenth night of what might be called the Sa'-zada convention, and Black Panther was making the iron bars of his cage jingle in their sockets with his full-voiced roar. Shoulders spread, and head low to the floor, his white fangs showing, he called "Waugh, waugh! Waw-houk! Come, Comrades. Ganesh, One-tusked Lord of the Jungles, Muskwa and Mooswa; you, Sher Abi, eater of Water-men; even little Magh; come all of you and listen to the lies of a Swine." Then he laughed: "Che-hough, che-hough! the lying tales of Jungli Soor."

"Ugh, ugh!" grunted Grey Boar, angrily, as he slipped up the graveled walk to the front of Leopard's cage. "In my land there is a saying of the Men-kind, that 'A lie can hide like a Panther; if it be a bad lie, that it is as difficult to come face to face with as Black Panther.' "

By this time the animals had all gathered, and Sa'-zada opening The Book, spoke;

"This is Wild Boar's night. I am sure he will tell us something interesting."

"A lie is often amusing," declared Magh.

"That may be so," retorted Boar, "for even Sa'-zada has said that you are the funniest Animal in the Park."

"But why should we listen to Soor's squeaky tales?" snarled Bagh; "when he gets excited his voice puts me on edge."

"Well," interrupted Sa'-zada, "these meetings are so that each animal may have a chance to tell us what good there is in him."

"Then why should Soor waste our time?" queried Magh. "Even he will know no good of himself."

"I don't know about that," answered Sa'-zada. "I think every animal is for some good purpose, and we can tell better after we have heard Boar's story."

"Here are two of us, O Sa'-zada," said Grey Boar. "I, who am from Burma, know of the way of my kind in that land, and Big Tusk, who is also here, being my Comrade, is from Nagpore, in India, and can tell you how we are persecuted in the North. If I am all bad, can anyone say why it is? I am not an eater of Bhainsa, Men's Buffalo, like Bagh and Pardus; neither am I, nor any of my Kind, known as Man-killers. Even in Hathi's family have there been Man-killers—the Rogue Hathi."

"But it is said in the Jungles that you sometimes kill *Bakri,* the Men's Sheep," declared Magh.

"All a lie!" answered Grey Boar. "We are not animals of the Kill; neither do we wreck the villages of the Men, as does Hathi, nor drive the rice-growers from their lands—lest they be eaten—as do Bagh and Pardus."

"But you eat their jowari and rice," asserted Panther.

"A little of it at times, perhaps, but only a little. Our food is of the Jungles, and how are we to know just what has been grown by the Men, and what has grown of itself? And in my land, which was Aracan in Burma, but for me and my people the Men could not live."

"In what manner, O Benefactor of the Oppressed?" asked Magh, mockingly.

"Because of Python, and Cobra, and Karait, and Deboia, and the other small Dealers of Death," answered Grey Boar, sturdily. "We roam the Jungles, and when these Snakes, that are surely evil, rise in our paths, we trample them, and tear them with our tusks——"

"And eat them, I know, cha-hau, cha-hau!" laughed Hyena, smacking his watering lips.

"Yes," affirmed Grey Boar. "Are not we, alone, of all Animals for this work? When Cobra strikes, and fetches home, does not even Hathi, or Arna, or mighty Raj Bagh, die quickly? But not so with us. I can turn my cheek, thus, to King Cobra,

(and he held his big grizzled head sideways), and when I feel the soft pat of his cold nose against my fat jaw, I seize him by the neck, and in a minute one of the worst enemies of Man is dead."

"What says King Cobra, then—Cobra and the others—crawling destroyers?" asked Magh, maliciously.

"This is Boar's story," interrupted Mooswa, seeing that Sa'-zada looked angry at the interruption.

"As I was saying," continued Grey Boar, "Cobra and his cousins kill more of the Men-kind, many times over, than all the other Jungle Dwellers put together. Think of that, Comrades—even when we are searching the Jungles on every side for these evil Poisoners; so if it were not for us, what would become of the Men? Yet in a hot time of little Jungle food, if we but eat a small share from their fields, the Men revile us. Also, there is cause for fear at times in this labor that is ours. Once I remember I had a tight squeeze——"

"Going through a fence into a jowari field, I suppose," prompted Magh.

"I did not have my tail cut off for stealing cocoanuts," sneered Grey Boar. "The tight squeeze was from Python; and do you know that to this day I am half a head longer than I was before our slim Friend twisted about my body. But I got his head in my strong jaws just as I was near dead."

"Perhaps you would not have managed it if he had not squeezed you out long," said Pardus.

"What I say," continued Boar, "is, that we are not the Evil Kind that is in the mouth of everyone. Cobra crawls into the houses of the Men, and for fear of their evil Gods they feed him; and one day in anger he strikes to Kill. That is surely wrong. But we live in houses of our own make."

"Certainly that is a lie," interrupted Magh. "Thou art a wanderer in the Jungle, a dweller in caves, even as Pard the Panther."

"You are wrong, Little One," declared Hathi, "for I have seen Boar's house. It's a sort of grass hauda."

"Yes," affirmed Wild Boar; "it is all of my own making, and of grass, to be sure. For days and days at a time, I do nothing but cut the strong elephant grass, and the big ferns, and the sweet bowlchie, and pile it up into a house. Then I burrow under it, and the rain beats it down over my back, and soon I have a nice, clean, waterproof nest. I am not a homeless vagabond like Magh and her wandering tribe——"

"And that's just it," broke in Big Tusk, the Nagpore Boar. "We, who are quiet and orderly in our manner of life, living in houses of our own building, as Grey Boar has said, are hunted and killed by the White-faced ones as a matter of sport. What think you of that, Sa'-zada—killed just for our tusks—for a pair of teeth?"

"It is likewise so with me, my narrow-faced Brother," whispered Hathi. "Many of my kind

are slain for their tusks; I, who have lived amongst the Men, know that."

Continued Big Tusk: "Yes, this is so; I have been in many a run in the corries of Nagpore. You see, I learned the game from my Mother when I was but a 'Squeaker,' for be it to the credit of the White ones, they kill not the Sows with their sharp spears."

"Was that pig-sticking?" asked Sa'-zada.

"It was," declared Big Tusk; "and my Mother, who was in charge of a Sounder of at least thirty Pigs, knew all about this game. We'd be feeding in the sweet bowlchie grass, or in a *thur khet,* when suddenly I'd hear her say, 'Waugh! Ung-h-gh!' which meant, 'Danger! lie low.' Then, watching, we'd see those of the Black-kind here, and there, and all over, with flags in their hands to drive the Pigs certain ways, and to show the Sahibs which way we went. Mother would always make us lie still until the very last minute; but almost always, sooner or later, the Sahibs would come galloping on their horses right in amongst us. 'Ugh-ugh-ugh-ugh!' Mother would call to us, and this meant, 'Run for it, but keep to cover'; and away we'd go, from *sun khet* to *dol* field, and then into *shur* grass, from Sirsee Bund to Hirdee Bund, or into the tall, thick bowlchie. Now the trouble was this way: Mother was so big and strong that the Sahibs on their ponies always galloped after, thinking her a Boar. Even the Black Men with the flags would

cry, *'Hong! Hong! Burra dant wallah!'* which means in their speech, 'A Boar of big tusks.' Many a time I've heard Mother chuckle over the run she'd given the Horsemen, for we'd lie up in the grass, and listen to the White-faced ones, the Sahibs, curse the Black Men most heartily for their foolishness in calling Mother a big-tusked Boar. It was all done to save the Tuskers, for while the Sahibs were chasing Mother, many an old chap has saved having a spear thrust through him by clearing off to some other *bund*."

"You did have a good schooling," remarked Gidar, the Jackal. "But did the Sahibs never spear any of your young Brothers?"

"No; as I have said, it was only a big-tusked one they cared for. But to me it seemed such a cruel thing, even when I was young; killing us with the sharp spears—for, more than once I've heard the scream of a Boar as he was stabbed to death."

"But what were you doing in the *dol* grass, you and your big Mother?" asked Bagh. "Were not you eating the grain of the poor villagers? I remember in my time, when I was a free Lord of the Jungles, that a poor old *ryot* (farmer) had a little field—a new field it was—just in the edge of the Jungle. I also remember it was *raji* he grew in it, and he prayed to me as though I were one of his Hindoo Gods, asking me to keep close watch over his field, and to kill all the Pigs, and the Chital, and Black Buck that might come there to destroy

his *raji*. Even, to give me a liking for the place, that I might mark it down in my line of hunt, he tied an old Cow there for my first Kill. I was the making of that Man," declared Bagh, sitting down and smoothing his big coarse mustache with his velvet paw—"the making of him, for he had a splendid crop of *raji*, and I, why I must have killed a dozen Pigs in and about his field."

"Oh, dear me!" cried Magh. "Sugared peanuts! Every Jungle Dweller is growing into a benefactor of the Men; even Pig is a much abused, innocent chap; and here's Bagh a protector of the poor *ryot*."

"But what were you doing in the *dol* field, Grunter?" queried Cobra; "that's what Bagh wants to know."

"Looking for Snakes," answered Boar, sulkily. "But what if we did eat a trifle of the grain; was that excuse for the Sahibs killing us? With their Horses did they not beat down and destroy more than we did? And have not the people of the land, the Black-kind, taken more from us in the way of food than we ever did from their fields? Many a time have they been saved from starvation by the meat of my tribe. And yet, through it all, we get nothing but a bad name, and that just because we stick up for our rights. Bagh talks about keeping us from the Man's field; that is just like him—it is either a false tale or he ate 'Squeakers'—little Pigs that couldn't protect themselves. Would he

tackle Me? Not a bit of it! If he did I'd soon put different colored stripes on his jacket—red stripes. He's a big, sneaking coward, that's what Bagh is. Why, I've seen him sitting with his back against a rock, afraid to move, while six Jungle Dogs snapped at his very nose—waiting for him to get up that they might fight him from all sides. Ugh, ugh! a fine Lord of the Jungle! a sneak, to eat little Pigs!

"But I did more than keep a *raji* field for a poor villager; I saved his life, and from Bagh, too. I don't know that he had ever given me to eat willingly, or even made *pooja* to me, but I was coming up out of his *thur* field one evening, and he was fair in my path, with one of those foolish ringed sticks in his hand. 'Ugh!' I said, meaning, 'Get out of the way,' but he only stood there.

"This made me cross, and I thought he was disputing the road with me, for I am not like Bagh, the Lord of the Jungle, who slinks to one side. Then I spoke again to the man, 'Ugh, ugh, wungh!' meaning that I was about to charge. All the time I was coming closer to him on the path. Then I saw what it was; my friend, Stripes the Tiger, was crouched just beyond the Man, lashing the grass with his long, silly tail.

"Now as I had made up my mind to charge something that was in my path, and as the sight of Bagh in his evil temper drew my anger toward him, I drove full at his yellow throat. Just one rip

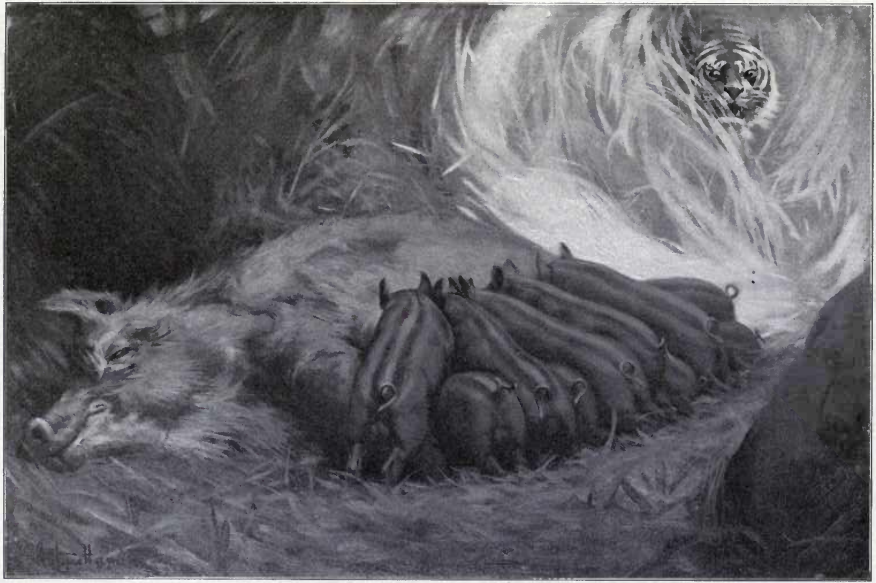
of my tusks, and with a howl like a starved Jackal he cleared for the Jungle. He meant to eat that Man, you see."

"Now we are getting at the truth of the matter," cried Magh, gleefully. "When these Jungle thieves fall out, we get to know them fairly well."

"But tell us more of this hunting of your kind with the spears, O brother of the Big Tusks," pleaded Hathi. "It does seem an unjust thing."

"Well," continued the Seoni Boar, "as I have said, while in my Mother's keeping, she taught me much of the ways of the Boar Hunters. Many a run from the Spear Men I've been in. But while I was small, and had not tusks, of course I was allowed to go, even when they came full upon the top of us; but in a few years my tusks grew, and each run became harder and more difficult to get away from. Besides, early in the Cold Time, at the time the Men call Christmas, we Boars all went off by ourselves, and left the Sows and Squeakers in peace; and, while I think of it, I've no doubt it was at this time that Bagh killed so many of my people in the *raji* fields. Had there been a big Tusker or two there, Tiger would have been busy looking for Chital or Sambhur.

"Well, through being away from my Mother this way, and mixing with the other Boars, I got to be quite capable of taking care of myself; and, as I lived year after year, finally the Black Men, Ugh! also the White-faced ones, gave to me the name



"IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT BAGH KILLED SO MANY OF MY PEOPLE"

of the Seoni Boar. So, with the more knowledge I gained with my years of being, the more I required it, for the closer they hunted me.

"Strange how it is that every Jungle Dweller's hand is against the Pig. I declare here, before all you Comrades, that more than once I have been lying dog-oh, close hid in the *bowlchie,* when a screech-voiced Peacock has commenced to cry, 'Aih-ou, aih-ou!' as plain as you like, 'Here he is, here he is!' and down on my heels would come the Spear Men on their rushing Ponies. But I soon learned to take to the Scrub-Jungle, knowing that the ponies would not follow me. But even there in the Jungle I've been hunted by the Black-kind; and then it was the same way, enemies afoot, and enemies overhead. Langur, a fool-cousin of Magh's there, many a time has betrayed my hiding-place to the hunt Man. 'Che-che-che, wow, wow!' over my head the silly thieves would chatter and well the Huntsmen would know that I had gone that way.

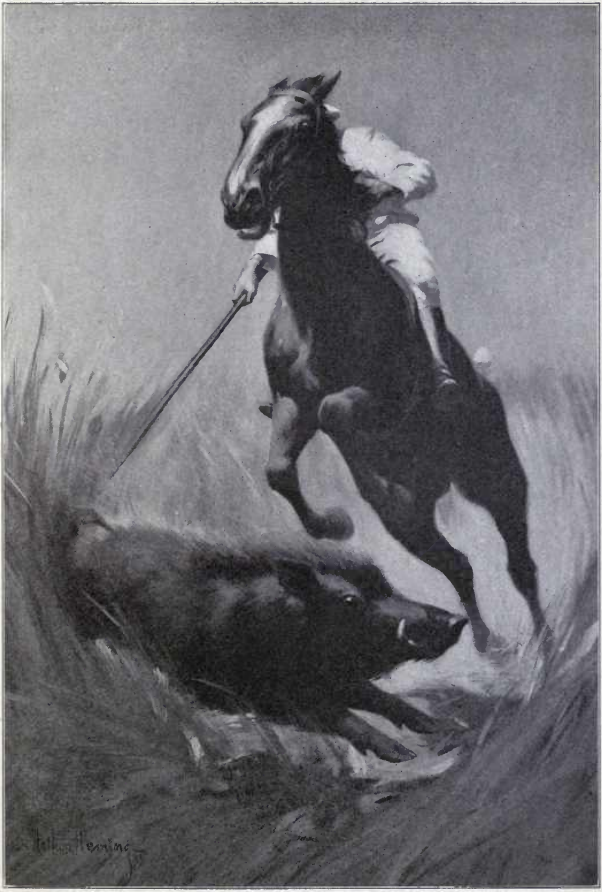
"Once when I was started out of the Seoni Bund, and was making with full speed through the *dol khet,* a meddlesome white Dog came chasing after me, snapping at my heels, and crying, 'Bah, ki-yi, bah, ki-yi!' Well I knew that as long as that noise kept up, I might as well be running out in the open in full view, so I checked my pace a little, and the Dog, with more pluck than good sense, laid me by the ear. With one rip of my tusk sideways, I cast him open from end to end. But such matters take

some time, and check one when the run is close, and before I could take to cover again, a Pony was fair on top of me.

"I jinked, as only a Boar who has been in many a run knows how. My jink was so sudden that the rider, seeking to spear me under his Pony's neck, came a full cropper in the black cotton-earth. Ugh-huh-huh! it makes me laugh now when I think of it. Of course I hadn't time to laugh then, for I had no sooner jinked clear of his spear than I saw coming up on the other side, the longest one of the Men-kind that was ever in the Jungle, and what with his spear he seemed like a tree. At once I remembered what my Mother had told me to do if ever a Spear-hunter got full on top of me. 'Into the horse's legs,' the old Dame had said; 'that's your only hope.' I must say that I charged Bagh that other time with greater joy than I slashed into that long Sahib's Pony.

"Of course, the Hunter thought I was going to run for it, so when I jinked short about and ripped his Pony's foreleg the full length of my nose, he was taken quite off his guard.

"It seemed as though part of the Jungle had fallen on me, for Pony and Huntman came down like ripe fruit off the Mowha tree. I got one rip at the Man's leg, and thought I'd made a fine cut, but I learned afterward, after they'd caught me, of course, that it was his boot-leg I had ripped——"



"'INTO THE HORSE'S LEGS,' THE OLD DAME HAD SAID."

"Oh, Sa'-zada, I believe the Seoni Boar is the best liar we've struck yet," said Magh.

"Not so," declared the Keeper, "this tale of the pig-sticking is a true tale, for it is written in The Book."

"I only tell that which is true," declared Big Tusk, the Seoni Boar. "And before I had got to the Scrub-Jungle, I had a spear driven into my shoulder from another Sahib, but I put my teeth through the giver's foot as I knocked his pony over from the side. It was a rare fight that day, but I got away at last."

"How were you caught?" queried Magh.

"Oh, that was long afterwards, and happened because of Bagh's evil ways. The Huntman had spread a big net in the Jungle to take Bagh, who had slain a Woman; and in the drive, not knowing of this evil thing, I came full into the net, and got so tangled up that I could not move. When the White Hunter saw that it was I, the Seoni Boar, he said, 'Let us take him alive, for he has given us mighty sport and fought well.' So they made a cage and I was forced into it from the net."

"Is that all?" asked Magh.

"Yes," replied Boar.

"Well," continued the Orang-Outang, "from your own account you appear to be a very fine fellow. I can't understand why all the Jungle Dwellers, even the Men-kind, connect your name with everything that's evil. I doubt if one of them

could speak as well for himself, were he allowed to tell his own story."

"As I have said before," commented Sa'-zada, "it's hardly fair to give an animal a bad name without knowing all about him, and Boar's stories have all been true, I know. But it's late now, so each one away to his cage or corral, and sleep."

Eleventh Night

The Stories of Oohoo, the Wolf, and Sher Abi, the Crocodile

ELEVENTH NIGHT

THE STORIES OF OOHOO, THE WOLF, AND SHER ABI, THE CROCODILE

"TO-NIGHT," said Sa'-zada, the Keeper, "we shall have a story from White Wolf of his home in the frozen North, and also one from Sher Abi, the Crocodile, of the warm land in which he lived, Burma."

"I am glad there is to be a tale of the Northland," said Mooswa, "for it's a lovely place."

"And Sher Abi is so stupid," added Magh the Orang, "that he's sure to fall to boasting of some of his murders."

"There's little to choose between them in that respect," commented Muskwa, "except that for cunning there is no one but Carcajou of the same wit as Wolf."

"Thank you, Comrade," cried Oohoo, the Arctic Wolf; "those of my land who are short of wit go with a lean stomach, I can tell you. But yet it is just the sweetest place that any poor animal ever lived in."

"It is," concurred Mooswa; "forests of green Spruce trees——"

"Not so, Brother Tangle-leg," objected Oohoo; "true I have been within the Timber Boundaries, but that was far to the south of my home. I remember, once upon a time, thinking to better my condition, for it was a year of scarce Caribou; I trailed down past Great Slave Lake to the home of my cousin, Blue Wolf, who was Pack Leader of the Timber Wolves. Ghurrh-h! but they led a busy life. Almost day and night they were on the hunt, for their kill was small; a Grey Rabbit, or a Grouse, or a Marten—a mere mouthful for a full-hungered Wolf.

"But in the Northland where one could travel for days and days over the white snow and the hunt meant a free run with no chance of cover for the prey, it was all a matter of strength and speed. Leopard has boasted of the merit of his spotted coat for hiding in the sun-splashed Jungle; and also Bagh has told how the stripes on his sides hide him in the strong grass. But look at me, my Comrades——"

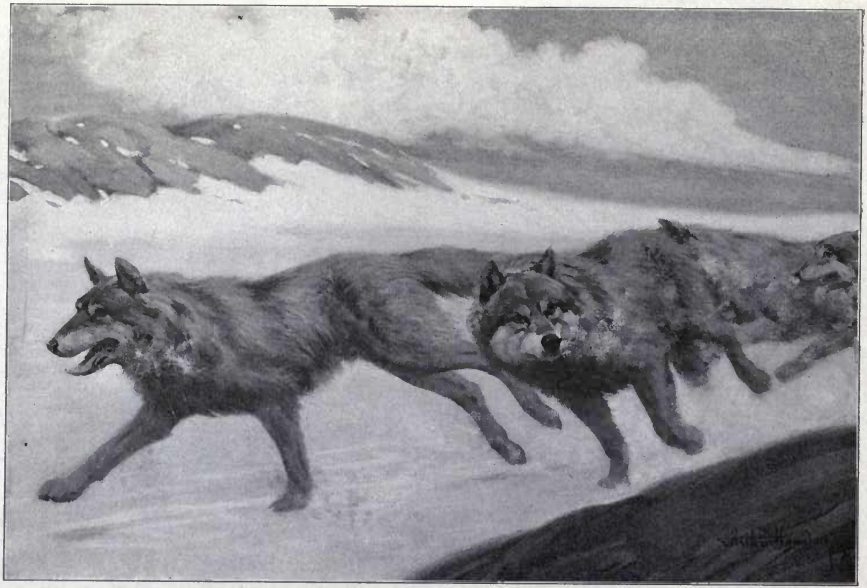
"You are pretty," sneered Magh.

"Here I am dirty brown," resumed Oohoo, paying no attention to the taunt, "and what does that mean?"

"That you are dirty and a Wolf," answered Magh, innocently.

"It shows that I live in a dirty brown place," asserted Wolf. "We are all dirty brown here."

"I'm not," objected Python.



"ONE COULD TRAVEL FOR DAYS OVER THE WHITE SNOW."

"You would be if you didn't lie in the water all day; but, as I was going to say, in that land of snow I was all white, and, by my cunning, with a careful stalk I always got within a running distance of—of—I mean anything I wanted to look at closely, you know."

"A Babe Caribou, I suppose," grunted Muskwa; "just to see how he was coming on. Have I not said that he has the cunning of a great thief?" Bear whispered to Hathi.

"But if he talks much the truth will come out," answered the Elephant.

"There were just three of us Plain Dwellers in all that great Barren Land," proceeded Oohoo; "my kind, and Caribou, and Musk-Ox."

"Eu-yah! the Musk-Ox are cousins of mine," remarked Bison. "Queer taste they have to live in that terrible land of rock and snow. What do they eat, Oohoo? Surely the sweet Buffalo Grass does not grow there?"

"They do not mind the cold," answered Wolf; "they have the loveliest long black hair you ever saw on any Animal. And under that again is the soft grey fur——"

"Yes," interrupted Sa'-zada to explain, "the Musk-Ox seems to have hair, and fur, and wool all on one pelt—much like a Sheep, and a Goat, and a Bison combined."

"And as for eating," resumed Oohoo, the Wolf, "the rocks are thickly covered with moss——"

"Engh-h-h! what a diet!" grunted Bison. "But you know of their manner of life, Brother Wolf—you must have paid much attention to their ways. Now in my land when Wolves came too close we gathered our Calves in the center of the herd——"

"A most wise precaution," asserted Mooswa. "In the Calf time with us the moan of the Wolf pack caused us to make ready for battle; the Grey Runners seemed always in the way of a great hunger."

"And what of grass-eating for those cousins of mine, the Caribou—what ate they?" sharply demanded Elk.

"Caribou have this manner of life," answered Oohoo. "Just at the end of the great Cold Time all the Mothers go far into the Northland, for that is the Calf time with them; and by the shores of the great Northland water their Babe Caribou come forth in peace. And for food the Mothers eat moss, even as Musk-Ox does, for there is nothing else. Near to the coming of the Cold Time again the Mothers come back with their Calves, and the Bulls, who have been in the Southland, meet them."

"Do you eat moss, Oohoo, the Wolf?" queried Magh.

"Am I a Grass-feeder? Did I eat my straw bedding and become ill, like a wide-mouthed Monkey that I know of?"

"But have you not said, Brother Wolf, that in the Northland Musk-Ox and Caribou eat moss be-

cause there is nothing else? Then what manner of food do you find?"

"Ghurr-r-h! Eh, what?" gasped Oohoo, feeling that Magh had laid bare his mode of life.

"Am I different from the others?" he snarled, seeing a broad grin hovering about the mouth of even Sher Abi, the Crocodile. "Because I am a Wolf, is there a law in the Boundaries that I shall not eat? Bagh, and Pardus, and Python, and Sher Abi, they are the Blood Kind, and do they eat moss or grass? Boar has said that all the evil of the Jungle is fastened upon the Pig, and in my land it is the Wolf that is wicked. This has been said by the Man, but are they not worse than we are? When the hunger, which is not of my desire, comes strong upon me, I go forth to seek food. I kill not Man; but if Caribou comes my way, and that which is inside of me says to make a kill, shall I do so, or lie down and die because of hunger? If a Wolf makes a kill, and feasts until his hunger is dead, and lies down to sleep, and kills no more until he is again hungered, it is all wrong, and evil words are spoken of him. But the Men kill, and kill, never stopping to eat, showing that it is not because of hunger—they kill until there is no living thing left; then they boast together of the slaughter.

"I have seen this happening at Fond du Lac, which is a narrow crossing between two lakes in my own land. There the Caribou pass when they go to the Northland; and I have seen the Redmen

killing these Moss-eaters as they swam from land to land—killing them beyond all count. In the Northland the Caribou were even as Buffalo on the Plains, they were that many; and they came like a running river to the crossing at Fond du Lac. The Men-kind were hidden behind stones, and when the Caribou were in the water these Red Slayers followed in canoes, and killed with their spears, and their knives, and their guns, until everything was red with blood. Not that they needed the sweet flesh because of hunger, for from many they took out the tongue, and left all the rest to rot. We, who are Wolves, and of evil repute, are not so bad as the Men, I think.

"And also the killing of the Musk-Ox is by the Redmen," declared Oohoo.

"I am afraid we must believe that," muttered Magh, "for Musk-Ox is not here, and it is a long way to the Northland for proof."

"Neither here nor in any other animal city are there Musk-Ox," explained Sa'-zada; "for none have been brought out alive."

"None!" added Wolf solemnly. "The Redmen say that if any are taken alive the others will all pass to some other land as did Buffalo. Not but that one of the White Men tried it once; but there is also a story of Head-taking I could tell."

"Tell it," snapped Pardus; "one lie is as good as another when told of a distant Jungle."

"Well I remember that year," began Oohoo.

"It was colder than any other time that I have memory of. We had gathered into a mighty Pack, Comrades; all white we were—all but our Leader, who was Black Wolf. And such hunger! E-u-uh, au-uh! I was almost blind because of the hunger pains.

"The Caribou that should have passed did not come; why, I cannot say, for it was their time of the year, the ending of the Cold Time."

"Were there no Musk-Ox?" insinuated Magh.

"A Wolf can make few kills of Musk-Ox," explained Oohoo, unguardedly; "that is—I mean—a bad Wolf who might seek a Kill of that sort. They are like Bison, or Arna, bunching up close in a pack with their big-horned heads all facing out; and even if the circle is broken, what then? their fur is so thick that it would take longer jaws than I have to cut a throat."

"You've tried it, Oohoo," suggested Magh.

"No, I've heard of this matter," he answered. "But the story was this way. That time two White Men came to the Big Lake——"

"Artillery Lake, I think," explained Sa'-zada.

"I know not, but it is a Big Water, and far north. And there they built a shack."

"You were interested," remarked Muskwa.

"There were cousins of ours, the Train Dogs, with them, so I sometimes went close for the chance of a chat——"

"The chance of a Pup, most likely," growled Gidar.

"Then one Man, with two Redmen and the Dog Train, went north after Musk-Ox. Some of us followed, for we knew that where the Men were there would be much killing, and much eating left for those of a lean stomach. It might be that some of the Dogs would die of toil, and we were that hungry, that starved, that even a Huskie would be sweet eating.

"As you know, Comrades, there is no timber grows in all that land beyond the Big Lake, so the Man carried a little wood in the Dog Sled to make hot his drinking——"

"Tea," suggested Sa'-zada.

"Day after day he tramped to the North, not seeing anything to kill; and all the time we were getting hungrier and leaner of stomach. At night we would come close to the little tepee wherein the Hunter slept, and I fear that something would have happened to him if it had not been for the wisdom of our Leader, Black Wolf.

" 'Wait, Pack Comrades,' he would say, 'there will surely be a kill of many Musk-Ox. I know the way of the White Men—they come here but for the shedding of blood.'

"But one night, being close to the edge of starvation, seeing one of the Huskies come forth from the tepee, not knowing what I did—Ghur-rh! I had him by the throat. Even now as I remember

it, perhaps it was another of the Pack that put his strong jaws on the Dog's gullet—yes, I think it was another.

" 'Ki, yi-i-i-i! E-e-eh!' he whined.

" 'Buh!' loud the Firestick barked as the White Man smote at the Pack with it.

"After a manner there was some eating that night, what with the Huskie and three of our kind the Man slew with the Firestick."

"Cannibal!" exclaimed Magh in disgust.

"It was to save our lives," exclaimed Oohoo. "At last the White Man came to a herd of Musk-Ox; but what think you of the temper Black Wolf had when he saw that the Men-kind were not for making a big Kill at all; just the matter of a Head or two to take back with them."

"Queer taste, sure enough," cried Cockatoo. "Now, if it had been a head with a crest like mine——"

"Or even if it had been Magh's head," insinuated Pardus.

"Eu-wh, eu-u-u-h! to think that a Pack of famished Wolves had trailed so far through the snow, holding back from a Kill of the Men-kind, and to get—nothing! True, the Men killed for their own eating and the Dogs', but what was that to a whole Pack? Buh-h-h! even now it makes me laugh when I think of the manner we tore down the tepee one night, for the Men had taken the eating inside to keep it from us.

"After that, having learned wisdom, they killed one of these fat creatures for us each day. Ghurrh! but a bite!

"And from listening beside the tepee at night, I learned that the Redmen were angry because of the Head-taking. These Forest-Dwellers think, Comrades, that if they sell or give away the head of a Kill all their strength in the hunt will depart."

"It's a wondrous good thing to believe, too," declared Coyote. "Many an honest meal I've come by when I was woefully hungry through the matter of a head stuck on a pole, or stump, as a gift to Matchi-Manitou. I remember one particularly fat head of Muskwa—I mean—but you were saying, Brother Oohoo, a most interesting happening of the Musk-Ox when I interrupted you."

"So, when the Redmen knew that it was heads their White Comrade was after, they were filled with anger, and a fear of the wrath of Manitou; they declared that something of an evil nature would happen to them if he took from that land the Heads. And, would you believe it, Comrades, whether there was truth in the power of this Head-matter or not, I am unable to say, being but Oohoo the Wolf, but two days from that time, as they journeyed back toward the Big Water, they fell in with a large Herd of the round-nosed Musk-Ox, and the Wind wrath came upon them. The Redmen, thinking to stop the taking of Heads, talked

to the Moss-eaters in a loud voice, as though they were men, bidding them go far over the Barren Lands and tell all the other Musk-Ox to keep away, for here was a taker of Heads. But the White Man only laughed, and killed a Bull Leader who had a beautiful long black beard, swearing that such a Head was a prize indeed.

"Comrades, perhaps there is someone looking over the lives of Animals who has power with the Wind and the White Storm. Of this I know not, but it is a true tale that even as he cut the head from the dead Moss-eater, such a storm as had not been in the memory of any Dweller came with the full fury of a hungry Wolf Pack down upon that land. Like Pups of one litter all of us Wolves huddled together, pulling the cover of our tails over our noses to keep the heat in. We waited; and moved not that day, nor that night, nor the next day, nor the night after that again. Bitter as the storm was, I almost laughed at Black Wolf's lament. 'Now the men will be dead and lost to us when we might have had them,' he kept whimpering; 'there will be no more killing of Musk-Ox, and we shall go hungry.'

"As we crawled out when the storm ceased, our Leader went to where the snow was rounded up a little higher than the rest. 'Here is the Musk-Ox,' said Black Wolf; 'let us eat.'

"I remember, as we dug at the snow there was a strong scent of Man. 'It is the Hunter dead, I

think,' Black Wolf said, poking his nose down into the snow.

"But all at once, 'Buh!' came a hoarse call from the Firestick, and Black Wolf, our Leader, 'E-e-he-uh!' fell over backward, dead. Then I knew what it was. The Huntman had cut open the Musk-Ox, and crawling inside, had kept his life warm through the fierce storm. But the Redmen had gone. Whether they had died because of the storm, or trailed away because of the Head-taking, I know not; but there they were not. Close curled against the Musk-Ox had lain the Hunter's three Dogs, and they, too, were alive.

"Then commenced such a trail of a Man, Comrades, as I, Wolf though I am, never wish to see again. E-u-uh! eu-u-uh! but it was dreadful, for in his face there was the Fear Look that Hathi has spoken of. Night and day it was there, I think, for he dared not sleep as he hurried back toward the Big Water. Being without a Leader, we were like a lot of Monkeys, fighting and jangling amongst ourselves. Some were for killing him, but others said, 'Wait, surely he will make a kill of Musk-Ox again, and then we shall have eating—what is one Man to a Wolf Pack in the way of food?'

"That day, coming up with a Herd, he shot two of the Moss-eaters, and, as we ate of them, he trailed to the South; but that availed him little, Comrades, for the swing of a Wolf's going is like

the run of a river; and when he camped that night we also camped there. And the next day, and the next, it was the same; the Huntman pushing on with tiring walk striving for his life, and, behind the Pack—some howling for a Kill of the Man, and some fighting to save him that we might have greater eating.

"It was the last day before we came to the Big Water. That day, being full famished, for we had passed the land of the Musk-Ox—though to be sure he had killed two Caribou for us—we ate his Dogs, and he was fleeing on foot.

"I must say, Comrades, though I lay no claim to a sweet nature, yet I wished not to make a Kill of the Man. But five times, as I remember it, some of the Pack, eager for his life, closed in on him; and five times with the Firestick he slew many of my Wolf Brethren. Comrades, he made a brave fight to reach the shack."

"This is a terrible tale," cried Magh, excitedly. "Did he reach the shack alive, Oohoo?"

"Yes, but would you believe it, Comrades, the White Man who had been left behind, through being alone and through drinking much Firewater, had become mad, even as I have seen a Wolf in the time of great heat; and he knew not his Comrade, the Huntman, but called through the closed door, 'Go away, go away!'

" 'I am Jack,' called the Huntman.

" 'Jack is dead!' yelped the Man who was mad.

'He is dead out in the strong storm, and you are an evil spirit—go away! go away!'

"Oh, Hathi, it was dreadful, dreadful.

" 'Let me in, Tom; I am Jack,' pleaded the Huntman who had come so far through the snow; and, just beyond, we of the Wolf Pack waited, waited, waited.

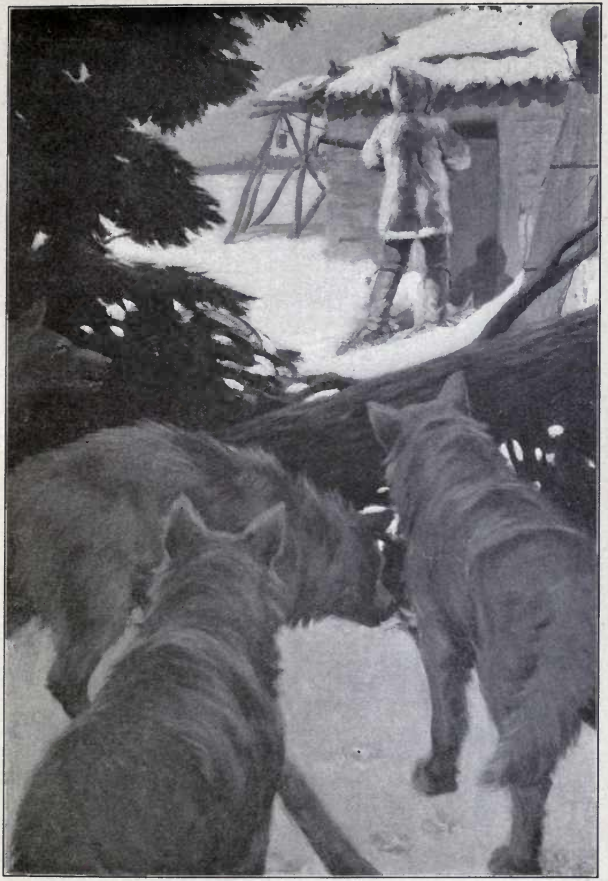
"Sa'-zada, the cry of the lone Wolf is not so dreadful as the yelpings of the Man who was mad. Even we of the Wolf Pack moved back a little when he called with a fierce voice. And he always answered: 'Go away! You are an evil spirit. Jack is dead! But I did not kill him—Go away!' And, Sa'-zada, though it is dreadful, yet it is true, he struck with his Firestick full through the door, and killed the Man who was Jack. And in the end he, too, died, and the Wolves buried them both after the manner of Wolves."

"Chee-hough! it's a terrible tale," said Magh.

"It is true," answered White Wolf; "and all that is the way of my land which is the Northland.

"In the Hot Time sometimes there are the little red flowers that are roses, but in the long Cold Time it is as I have said, cold and a land of much hunger. But it is my land—the Northland."

"Engh-h-hu!" sighed Sher Abi, opening his eyes as though just coming out of a dream; "I had an experience one time very much like that, Brother Wolf."



"'LET ME IN, TOM; I AM JACK,' PLEADED THE HUNT MAN."

'Of a snow storm, Sher Abi?" queried Mooswa, doubtingly.

"No, my solemn friend, I know nothing of snow; I speak of having a Man inside of one. As Sa'-zada has said, I think it's quite possible, and I'm sure they must rest nice and warm, too."

"Did a Man cut you open, Magar?" sneered Magh.

"No, little Old Woman, he did not; he was busy that day taking off your tail for stealing his plantains."

"Tell us about it, Magar," lisped Python. "Wolf's tale of his snow-land makes me shiver."

"There is not much to tell," murmured Sher Abi, regretfully. "It was all over in a few minutes, and all an accident, too; and, besides, it was only one Man. You see, I was sunning myself on a mud bank in Cherogeah Creek, when I heard 'thomp, thomp, thomp!' which was the sound of a Boatman's paddle against the side of his log dug-out. I slid backward into the water, keeping just one eye above it to see what manner of traveler it might be. It was old Lahbo, a villager who often went up and down that creek, so I started to swim across, meaning to come up alongside of his canoe and wish him the favor of Buddha. As you know, Comrades, all Animals love these Buddhists, for their Master has taught them not to take the life of any Jungle Dweller.

"As I have said, I was swimming across the

creek, when Lahbo, who must have been asleep, suddenly ran his canoe up on my back. It was such a light little dug-out, too, quite narrow, and being suddenly startled, I jumped, and by some means Lahbo's canoe was upset. Poor old Lahbo! How my heart ached for him when I heard him scream in the water."

"Oh, the evil liar!" whispered Magh in Hathi's ear.

"Hush-h!" whistled Elephant, softly, through his trunk; "Sher Abi was ever like this; I know him well. It is just his way of boasting; he knows nobody believes it."

"Poor Lahbo," continued Magar. "I swam quickly to help him, picked him up tenderly in my jaws, and started for the shore. I would have saved his life in another minute, but his cries had gone to the ears of some Villagers, and they were now on the bank of the creek, and with two Fire-sticks, also. I was in a terrible fix, Comrades; if I held my head under water, poor Lahbo would drown; if I held it up, the Village Men would kill me with the Firestick."

"How did it end, Saver of Life?" asked Pardus. "Did poor Lahbo ask you to swallow him to save his life?"

"I really can't say what did happen," answered Sher Abi. "To this day tears come into my eyes when I think of poor Lahbo. And it was all the fault of the Villagers, for when the Firestick

coughed, I think the Man-fear, that Hathi has spoken of, came over him, for he commenced to wriggle about so that I couldn't hold him. I was so careful, too, for my teeth are sharp, and I was afraid of hurting him. But, anyway, before I knew it, Ee-eh-he! he had slipped down my throat; poor Lahbo! And do you know, Comrades, I'm a little afraid I'm not done with him yet, for he had a big two-handed dah (sword) in his waist-band, and I know that some of the pains I feel at times are due to that; there's nothing so hard to digest as a Burmese dah. And to this day, Comrades, sometimes when I'm jumping about it seems to me that bangles and rings that are inside of me string themselves on that sword—I fancy at times I can hear them jingle."

"How did you come to have bangles inside of you?" asked Magh most solicitously.

"Engh-hu! little Moon-face, you make me very tired. If any one tells a tale you try to put false words into his mouth."

"And bangles," snapped Magh.

"Who spoke of bangles?" asked Sher Abi. "I said not that they were bangles, but that it was like that—the pains I mean. Perhaps even Lahbo dropped the dah overboard, for all I know. And look here, little one, Moon-faced Languar, if you doubt what I say, you may go inside and see for yourself."

"How came you to this place, Sher Abi?"

asked Mooswa. "Did the Villagers catch you then?"

"Not that time. But once, hearing a Pariah Dog in great distress, I thought he called to me for aid, even as poor Lahbo had done, so I swam quickly to lend him help——"

"Poor Dog," jeered Magh.

"But it was all a vile trick of the Men-kind," declared Magar; "though at the time, not knowing of this, I paid no heed to the matter. There were two long rows of stakes in the water coming close together at one end——"

"Lough-hu! I know," murmured Buffalo; "the walls of a stockade."

"Yes," sighed Sher Abi. "And as I pushed through the small end, the poor Dog being just beyond, and in great distress, a big rope drew tight about my neck, and before I could so much as object, many of the Men-kind pulled me out on to the dry land. Then I was sent here to Sa'-zada."

"Well, well," murmured Hathi, "it seems to me that every Jungle-Dweller thinks he's badly treated, but judging from all the tales I've heard I think we've all got our faults—I think we're nearly as bad as the Men-kind."

"My people are not," objected Buffalo; "we never did harm to anyone."

"Neither did we," exclaimed Mooswa.

"Nor we," added Elk; and soon the clamor became general, all holding that the Men-kind who

killed almost every animal for the sake of taking its life, and not because they were driven to it by lean stomachs, were much worse than the Jungle-Dwellers.

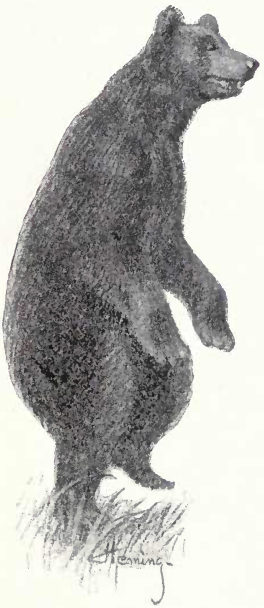
"Well, well," decided Hathi, "it seems that most of you are against me, anyway. I think Buffalo is right in what he says, but some of us have done much wrong to the Men-kind——"

"Meaning me, of course," ejaculated Wild Boar. "I, who lay no claim to being good, and who am counted the worst of all Animals, say, with Buffalo, that the Men-kind have done more harm to me than I to them, and have been of less benefit to me than I to them."

Then Sa'-zada spoke: "Comrades, this is a question that we can't settle. If we were all like the Buddhists, and took no life except because of great need, perhaps it would be better. But now you must all go back to your cages and corrals to sleep."

Twelfth Night

The Story of Sa'-Zada, "Zoo" Keeper



TWELFTH NIGHT

THE STORY OF SA'-ZADA, THE "ZOO" KEEPER

IT was the twelfth night of the Sa'-zada stories. For eleven evenings Tiger, and Leopard, and the others had told of their manner of life, with more or less relevancy. This night Sa'-zada, the little Master, was to speak of his jungle and forest experience.

Magh, the Orang, was filled with a joyous anticipation. Perched as usual on Hathi's broad forehead, she gave expression to little squeaks of enjoyment.

Once even she stuck out her long, elastic underlip and broke into the little jungle song she always had resource to when pleasantly excited:

"Co-oo-oo-oo-oo! Co-wough, wough-oo!" with a rising inflection that made the listener's ears tingle. She even danced a modest can-can on Hathi's patient old head.

The Keeper came briskly up the walk, and patting Hathi's trunk affectionately as it was held out to him, sat on the grass with his back against Mooswa's side.

"Well, Comrades," he commenced, "before I

came to a state of friendship with the Jungle Dwellers, I was like a great many others of my kind, and thought the only pleasure to be got from animals was in killing them."

"It is the beginning of a true talk," commented Pardus.

"And, so, in that time I hunted a great deal," continued Sa'-zada. "When I first went to Burma to live, my bungalow was just on the edge of the Jungle, and some of the Dwellers were always forcing their presence upon me—either Snakes, or Jackals, or Jaruk the Hyena, or the Bandar-Log; and one night even a Rogue Elephant——"

"Hum-p-p-ph! he should have been prodded with a sharp tusk," commented Hathi.

"A Rogue Elephant," continued Sa'-zada, "came down and played basket-ball with my garden and bamboo cook-house. Gidar the Jackal, with a dozen companions, used to gut my kitchen, and then sit out in the moonlight and howl at me in derision."

"We sing at night because we can't help it, and not because of ill will to the Men-kind," corrected Gidar.

"Well, one night, as the Jackals were in the middle of a heavy chorus, they suddenly ceased; a silence as of death came over everything; it seemed as though all life had gone miles away from that part of the country. Then came a hoarse call which shook my little bungalow——"

"I know," interrupted Gidar, "when we stop singing and move away silently it is to make room for Bagh the Killer. We object to being seen in the company of a murderer like that."

"Yes, it was Tiger," asserted Sa'-zada, "and two Sahibs, who were my companions, and, like myself, new to the country, determined to get him.

So next evening we took a Goat and tied it just inside the Jungle, each one of us lying down on the ground at a short distance from our bait. But the Goat commenced to browse quietly and refused to bleat. I tried jumping him up and down by the tail and back of his neck, and he'd bleat just as long as I'd pump. At last I tied him up so that he stood on his hind legs, and he called then with full vigor. For the matter of an hour we lay thus, when presently, behind me, I heard the stealthy step of some huge Jungle Dweller coming for the Goat.

"It was the most deliberate animal I had ever waited for; it seemed hours that those carefully planted feet had been heading towards the back of my head. I could see nothing, for I was facing the other way, and I dared not turn over for fear of frightening the approaching Tiger away. This is a true tale, Comrades, and I did not like overmuch the idea of Bagh or Pardus, whichever it might be, pouncing upon me from behind."

"And they would do it," declared Gidar, "for

there is a saying in their tribe that "a kill from behind is a kill of skill.' "

"Were you afraid, little Master?" asked Hathi.

"I didn't like it," answered Sa'-zada, evasively.

"I've lain close hid in the Elephant Grass," said Bagh, "when a mighty drive of the Sahibs was on; and perhaps you felt that time, O Sa'-zada, even as I did."

"I, too, have heard the Pigstickers galloping, galloping all about a little *nulla* where I have sought for safety and the chance of my life," added Wild Boar, "and it's dreadful. If all the Sahibs could have known that feeling, even as you did, O Sa'-zada, perhaps they would hunt us less."

"Perhaps," answered the Keeper; "but I could hear the great animal creeping, oh, so carefully, step by step, hardly a twig shifting under his cautious feet—only a little soft rustle of the leaves as they whispered to the sleepy night air that something of evil was afoot. It got on my nerves, I must say, for I knew that I had not one chance in a thousand if Bagh were to spring upon me from behind. A fair fight I did not mind. I dared not even whisper to my companions, for they were a short distance from me, lest I should frighten the quarry away. When the soft-moving feet were within five yards of my head they became silent, and I felt that the great animal, Bagh or Pardus,

or some other Killer, was crouched ready for a spring.

"One minute, two minutes, an hour—perhaps half the night I seemed waiting for something to happen. The suspense was dreadful. One of my comrades had heard the footsteps, too, for I could see his rifle gleam in the moonlight as he held it ready to fire at sight of the animal. The strain was so trying that I almost wished Bagh would charge.

"But at last my nerves got the better of me and I turned over on my face, bringing my Express up to receive the visitor. The noise startled him, and with a hoarse bark he was off into the Jungle. It was only little ribbed-faced Barking Deer, who had come out of curiosity to see what the Goat was making a row about."

Hathi gave a great sigh of relief, for the Little Master's story of thrilling danger had worked him up to a pitch of excited interest.

"I remember a little tale of a happening," said Arna the Buffalo. "We were a herd of at least twenty, lying in a bit of nice, soft muddy land, for it was a wondrous hot day, I remember, when suddenly right through the midst of us walked a Sahib, and with him was one of the Black Men-kind. By his manner I knew that he had not seen us, being half-buried as we were in the *jhil*. Just beyond where we rested was a plain of the dry grass Eating, and to that our enemies the Men passed. Com-

rades, the method of our doing you know, when there is danger. If it is far away, and we see it, we go quickly from its presence, as is right for all Jungle Dwellers; but should it come suddenly close upon us we fight with a strength that even Bagh dreads.

"As I have said, seeing the Sahib so close, our Leader sprang up and snorted in anger. Now Bagh, when he is in an evil temper, roars loudly; but we, being people of little voice, trusting more to our horns than to noise, only call 'Eng-ugh!' before we charge. So, when our Leader called twice, we rushed out into the field where was this Sahib. I remember well, the Black man ran with great speed across the Plain, but the Sahib faced us. In his eyes there was a look such as I have seen in the eyes of another Bull when I have challenged him, and it was a question whether we should fight or not.

"But fear came not to this Man," added Arna, decidedly, "for as we raced down upon him, he smote at us with his Firestick, and taking the cover that was on his head——"

"His helmet," suggested Sa'-zada.

"The cover in his hand," proceeded Arna, "charged full at us, calling us evil names in a loud voice. I know not which of us turned in his gallop, but certain it is that the herd passed on either side of the Man and he was not hurt."

"But did you not turn and trample him?" asked Boar.

"No," answered Arna; "when we charge we charge, and there's an end of it."

"That is also our way," concurred Bagh, "except, perhaps, when we are struck by the Firestick, then sometimes we turn and charge back."

"By-the-memory-of-honey!" said Muskwa the Bear, "I should like to hear a tale from Sa'-zada of my people."

"Well," declared the Keeper, "there was a happening in connection with Muskwa's cousin, Grizzly, that makes me tremble—I mean, calls up rather unpleasant memories to this day."

"I'm glad of that—Whuf! glad we're to have the story," corrected Muskwa, apologetically.

"It was in the Rocky Mountains," began Sa'-zada, "in the South Kootenay Pass. I was after Big Horn, the Mountain Sheep, with two Comrades, and a guide called Eagle Child, when we saw a big Grizzly coming down the side of a mountain called the Camel's Back.

"Now, Eagle Child was a man very eager to do big things, so, almost without asking my consent, he laid out the whole plan of campaign. On the side of the Camel's Back Mountain grew a spruce forest, and through this snow avalanches had ploughed roadways, from top to bottom, looking like the streets of a city. Eagle Child called to me as he forded the mountain stream on his Horse

that he would go up one of these snow roads and get the Grizzly, or turn him down another one for me.

"Now, Comrades, Muskwa here is a man of peace, loving his honey and his Ants, but Grizzly is one to interview with great caution, and my Comrade, Eagle Child, being a man of unwise haste, you will understand, Comrades, that I expected strange happening when he started to interfere with Grizzly's evening plans, for it was toward the end of the day."

"It is not wise to meddle with one of a short temper," declared Hathi.

"I am not one of a short temper," objected Grizzly. "I seek a quarrel with no one; but, perhaps, if this man, who was Sa'-zada's comrade, sought to make a kill of one of our kind, there may have been trouble. If I am of a great strength why is that—is it so that I may be killed easily? Have I not strong claws just as Bagh has his teeth, and Boar his tusks, and Python his strength of squeeze?—even also have I somewhat of a squeeze myself. And shall I not use these things that I have, as do the other Forest Dwellers when their desire is to live? I am not like Elk that can gallop fast—flee from a slayer. And so, if I, being strong, fight for my life, it is temper, eh? Wough! I am as I am. But go on, Little Master—tell us of this happening."

"As I was saying," recommenced Sa'-zada,

"when Eagle Child in his great eagerness started after that Bear, I had an idea there would be fun, and there was—though I must say that I followed up to give him some help."

"There was no harm in that," said Grizzly, magnanimously. "Comrades of the same kind must help each other."

"That Eagle Child had ridden up to meet the Grizzly was in itself a fair promise for excitement, but also his Cayuse was one of the jerkiest brutes ever ridden by anybody. He had a great dislike for spurs."

"Quite right, too," bubbled Unt the Camel; "I remember a Cavalry Man on my back once——"

Sa'-zada interrupted Camel, and continued: "A dig from the spurs and the Cayuse would refuse to budge; but, of course, the rider knew that.

"Eagle Child thought that the Bear was working down in a certain direction, but, as you know, Comrades, Muskwa is a fellow of many notions, turning and twisting and changing his course beyond all calculations."

"Yes, we are like that," assented Muskwa. "It is our manner of life. We find our food in small parts, and in many places—berries here, and Ants there, and perhaps Honey on the other side. We are not like Bagh, who goes straight for his Kill, for we must keep a sharp lookout or we shall find nothing."

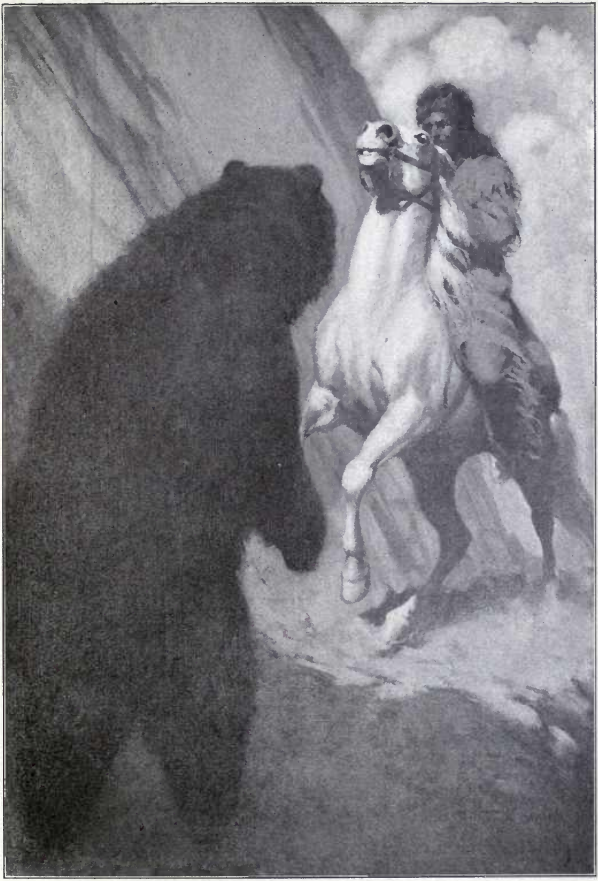
"Well, Grizzly evidently turned, for, while my

Guide was looking for him in one direction, he bounced out not ten yards from the Cayuse from a totally different quarter. This rather startled Eagle Child; and, though he should have known better, he dug the silly spurs into his erratic tempered Horse, with the result that the latter balked —bucked up like a stubborn mule.

"This looked as though he meant to stop and fight it out—the Grizzly evidently thought so, for he gave a snort of rage and tore down the mountain full at his enemy. I dared not shoot for fear of striking my comrade; but one bullet wouldn't have mattered, anyway; it wouldn't have stopped the charging Grizzly. Luckily for Eagle Child, his Horse reared just as the Bear arrived, and though he was sent flying, Muskwa's cousin did not succeed in clawing him, his time being taken up in making little pieces of the Horse. Eagle Child arrived at the foot of the mountain very rapidly, for all this had happened at the top of a long shale cut bank, and he did not look for smooth paths, but just came away without regard to the means of transport."

"And is that all of the tale?" inquired Magh, with a rather disappointed air, for she had hoped to hear of Muskwa's getting the worst of the encounter.

"Not by any means," answered Sa'-zada; "that was but the beginning. My comrade being out of the way," he continued, "I fired at Grizzly."



"THE GRIZZLY . . . BOUNCED OUT NOT TEN YARDS FROM THE CAYUSE."

"To kill him?" exclaimed Mooswa, reproachfully.

"That was before I was comrade to the Jungle Dwellers," apologized the Keeper—"before I knew they were more interesting alive than dead. And I fear I struck him, too," he added, "for when he had finished knocking the Horse to pieces we saw him go up the side of the Camel's Back limping as though a leg had been broken."

"That was a shame," declared Mooswa.

"It would have been a great shame, an outrage," asserted Bagh, "if I, or Pardus, or even Hathi had broken the leg of a Man; we would have been hunted by a drove of twenty Elephants, and many of the Men-kind."

"But," objected Magh, "as Sa'-zada has said, that was before he had proper wisdom, so we bear him no malice. Even Muskwa does not, do you, old Shaggy Sides?"

"No, I did not know the law of life then," said the Keeper; "and Eagle Child and myself followed after poor old wounded Grizzly and in our hearts was a desire for his life. Eagle Child was cross because I had laughed at him when he came down all covered with mud, also he had lost a Horse. He swore that he would kill that Bear if it took a week."

"I know," commented Hathi, swinging his trunk sideways and lifting Jaruk off his feet with a blow in the ribs as if by accident. "I hate the smell of

that Jungle Scavenger," he confided to Magh in a whisper. "I know," he continued aloud, "I've heard the Sahibs swear often, over a less matter than the killing of a Horse, too."

"We thought that Grizzly was badly wounded and couldn't go far, and that we should soon come within range of him up amongst the rocks."

"Of course, he went up, having a broken leg," declared Pardus; "that's the way with all Forest Dwellers—one pitches going down on three legs."

"But it was getting late, so we hurried fast. I had tied my Horse to a tree, for the climb was steep. Up, up, up we went; sometimes catching sight of Grizzly, sometimes seeing a drop of blood——"

"Dreadful," whimpered Mooswa. "Why should Men be so eager to see the blood of Forest Dwellers who have not harmed them?"

"Sometimes we saw blood on the rocks," proceeded Sa'-zada, "and sometimes we followed Grizzly's trail by the mark of a stone upturned where his strong claws had been planted. Once I got another shot at him, and struck him, too, but, as Greybeard here might tell you, a Grizzly is like Arna, he can carry off the matter of twenty bullets unless they happen upon his heart or brain."

"That is even so," concurred Grizzly. "Whuff! I have at least a dozen in my own body. The Men seek to improve our tempers after that manner."

"It was getting late," resumed Sa'-zada, "but

still we continued upward, the Bear holding on with great strength. It was October, and in the hollows of the upper ranges snow was lying like a white apron in a nurse's lap. 'He went this way,' said the guide to me, pointing to a narrow ledge of rock around the side of a cliff, with a drop from it of a thousand feet.

"Now, Eagle Child was a Stony Indian, and they are like Mountain Sheep in their ability to climb. We had to work our way down carefully to this ledge, helping each other lest we fall, and even when it was reached the yawn of the valley a thousand feet below caused me to tremble. So, cautiously we worked along this narrow path, and, as we rounded the point, to our great fear we saw that we could go no farther—a dead wall stood two hundred feet high in front of us. Slowly, cautiously, we turned our bodies, and went back; and then we saw what we had overlooked in our eagerness for poor old Grizzly's life—we could not get up the way we had come down—we were trapped."

"It's a dreadful feeling," declared Pardus, "to be caught in a Trap—though there were no Men enemies about you, Sa'-zada, to make it worse."

"Or to be shut up in a Keddah," muttered Hathi —"it's awful. To be taken out of one's nice pleasant jungle and led into a Keddah trap with those of the Men-kind trumpeting and calling, and even those of our own tribe, Elephant, taking part against us."

"Was that what made you friend to the Jungle Dwellers, Sa'-zada?" asked Muskwa.

"At the time," answered the Keeper, "I thought only of the dreadful fix we were in. Below, a thousand feet or more, the sharp tops of the spruce and cedar stood like spears——"

"I've felt a spear in my shoulder, ugh, ugh! it drives one fair mad with fear and pain," grunted Boar.

"Under our feet was a narrow ledge of rock not the width of Hathi's back; behind us, and on either side of us, the cliffs ran up hundreds of feet. On the upper peak of the Camel's Back a snowstorm was shutting out the last grey light of day—the darkness of night was fast coming on. I could see nothing for it but to stand perfectly straight with our backs to the rock wall all through the bitter night and talk to each other to keep sleep away. The next day our comrades might find us, and let down a rope to help us up."

"You could also think in the night of how we feel, O Little Brother, when we are hunted," declared Pardus. "Even perhaps Grizzly with his broken leg had to lie on some rock, afraid to travel in the night lest he fall."

"Yes, it was a good time to think of the troubles of Jungle Dwellers," concurred Hathi.

"I thought of many things," said the Keeper, softly; "and but for Eagle Child I fear I should have fallen a dozen times; I felt his hand on

my arm more than once pressing me against the wall. But at last morning came. I never felt so cold in my life, for, you see, we dared not move about. But it was noon before I saw my two comrades riding up the valley looking for us.

"Eagle Child called, 'Hi, yi, yi—oh, yi!' The rocks threw his voice far out, and they heard it. It took them a long time to climb up to the place from where we had descended. They had brought their lassos with them, for they knew that we were cut off; and soon, but with much cautious labor, we were safe."

"And what of Grizzy?" asked Muskwa, solicitously.

"I hope he, too, got away all right," answered Sa'-zada, "for I never saw him again—we did not follow him."

"I think Wie-sah-ke-chack led you to that place, Little Master, to give Grizzly a chance for his life," commented Mooswa.

"I like our Master's story," declared Hathi; "so often I've heard the Sahibs boasting of the Animals they have killed, but Sa'-zada tells only of the times fear came to him because of his wrong-doing."

"That happening was of Greybeard, and he is but a cousin of mine," complained Muskwa the Black Bear. "Did you never meet with my family, Little Master?"

"If you insist upon it, Muskwa," answered the Keeper, "I might tell a little tale of your people."

"I should like that—do," pleaded Black Bear; "in all the stories there has been nothing of our doing."

"But they were also only relatives of yours, though they were black, for the happening was in India, and there they are called Bhalu the Bear. And the happening was not of my doing, either, for I was hunting Bagh, the Tiger."

"Every hunter takes me for a choice," growled Raj Bagh.

"But this was a bad Tiger," declared Sa'-zada; "he had killed many people."

"And what of that—Waugh-houk! what of that, Little Master?" demanded Raj Bagh. "Have not many people killed many of my kind—are they not always killing us?"

"Still the Little Master is right," objected Hathi. "If a Bull Elephant becomes Rogue, and, neglecting his proper eating which is in the Jungle, goes seeking to kill the Men-kind, does he not surely come into trouble?"

"But we be flesh eaters and slayers of life," answered Raj Bagh.

"Even so, though that were better otherwise, but do you not know of your own people that the Men-kind are not for Kill? Before all other Dwellers of the Jungle you stand forth and are ready to

battle, but just the *scent* of Man causes you to slink away like Jaruk the Hyena."

"I think that is true," commented Mooswa. "Wie-sah-ke-chack has arranged all that."

Said the Keeper: "It is not right to kill the animals as men do, for sport, but when Bagh, or any other Jungle Dweller, turns Man-eater, he should die."

"And Sher Abi, too," squeaked Magh; "his tribe are all Man-eaters—they should be all killed."

"At any rate," continued the Keeper, "I was after this Man-eater. I had a *machan* built in a Pipal tree, and a Buffalo calf tied up near it——"

"One of your young, Arna," said Bagh, vindictively.

"And early in the evening I climbed into my *machan* and prepared for Mister Stripes."

"That's Man's way," sneered Raj Bagh. "What chance have we against them up in a *machan?* No chance; and they call that sport."

"And what chance has a village woman against a big-fanged Tiger?" grunted Boar. "No chance. It seems to me there are few in the Jungle as decent as Hathi and myself; we meddle not with the Men."

"Just before dark," continued Sa'-zada, "I heard a noise coming through the Khir bushes. 'Bagh comes early,' I thought to myself."

"He must have been hungry to scent a kill before dark," muttered Raj Bagh.

"He smelt a man and thought it a good chance to commit murder," sneered Magh.

"It wasn't Tiger at all," said the Keeper, "but three noisy Black Bears—Bhalu the Bear. I thought they would soon pass, for they do not meddle much with cattle."

"No, we are not throat cutters like Bagh," whuffed Muskwa.

"But they seemed in an inquisitive mood. Now, the calf was tied to the foot of a toddy palm, and they looked at him as much as to say, 'What are you doing here?' "

"I would have explained matters to them had I been there," exclaimed Arna, shaking his head. "A poor Calf!"

"No doubt they meant to help him out of his trouble," volunteered Muskwa.

"Presently one of them proceeded to climb the toddy palm, and I thought they were looking for me perhaps. On the tree was a jar the natives had put there for catching the toddy liquor; and you can imagine my surprise, Comrades, when I saw Bhalu take a big drink out of this. When he came down one of his comrades went up. There were half-a-dozen toddy trees there, and the Bears helped themselves to the toddy until in the end they became very drunk."

"I know how that feels," said Oungea the Water

Monkey; "have I not told you, Comrades, of the gin my Master——"

"Caw-w-w, caw-w-w!" interrupted Crow. "I also know of that condition. I ate some cherries once that had been thrown from a bungalow in Calcutta, and they made my head wobble so I couldn't fly. A Sahib stood in the door and laughed and said I was drunk."

"The cherries had been in brandy, I suppose," explained Sa'-zada. "But Bhalu was most unmistakably drunk. They wanted to play with the Calf, but he became frightened and bawled. I could see there was small chance of a visit from Bagh with three drunken Bears and a bellowing Calf at the foot of my tree."

"This is a nice story, Muskwa," sneered Magh. "I'm so glad to hear of your people and their ways."

"Only cousins of mine," declared Muskwa, "and called Bhalu."

"All Bears are alike," snapped Coyote; "meddlesome thieves."

"They steal little Pigs," added Boar.

"They wouldn't go away," said Sa'-zada, "and I began to fear that I shouldn't get a shot at Stripes. I did not want to shoot, because if Tiger was anywhere in the neighborhood it would put an end to his visit. I had nothing heavy to throw at them except my water-bottle; but, finally, taking a long drink to keep the thirst away for a time, I

stood up in the *machan* and let fly the bottle. It caught the Bear just behind the ear, and Bhalu, thinking one of his comrades had hurt him, pitched into the other two, and there was a fierce three-cornered fight on in a minute."

"I can swear that it is a true tale," barked Gidar, "for twice I've seen a family of Bhalu's people in just such a stupid fight. Not that they were possessed of toddy, for they are silly enough at all times. But it is known in the Jungle that when Bhalu is wounded, he fights with the first one he sees, even his own brother, thinking he has done him the harm."

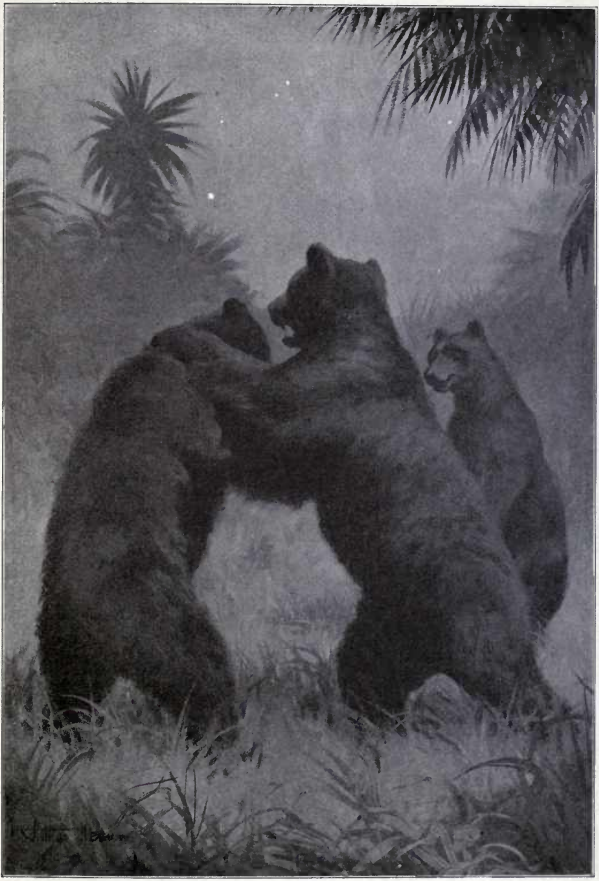
"One chap got the worst of the encounter and reeled off into the Jungle, the other two following. I could hear them wrangling and snarling for a long distance—all the world like a party of drunken sailors."

"These Bear stories are just lovely," grinned Magh. "Aren't they, Muskwa?"

"Did you kill Bagh, the Man-eater?" asked Muskwa, to change the subject.

"Yes, I stopped his murderous career that night," answered Sa'-zada. "He was an evil animal and deserved to die. Now it is late and you must all go to your cages."

"I'm glad your people had a chance to be heard from, Muskwa," lisped Magh as she slid down Hathi's trunk. "You always looked so terribly



"BHALU . . . PITCHED INTO THE OTHER TWO."

respectable and honest, that I was really afraid to speak to you."

"Phrut, phrut!" muttered Hathi through his trunk; "I have lived for a matter of forty years or so, amongst the Jungle Dwellers and with the Mankind, and I think that we are all alike, all having some good and some bad qualities."

THE END

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